

## **The reputation of the German School Helsinki**

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<p>The objective of this bachelor's thesis is to analyse the reputation of the German School Helsinki among parents, alumni and teachers.</p> <p>The theoretical part covers the definitions of identity, image and reputation from a general viewpoint and offers some details applied to educational institutions. On top of that, what customer satisfaction means from the viewpoint of a school is examined. The emphasis is put on parents and teachers.</p> <p>In the empirical part both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. Parents' satisfaction with the school was analysed by online questionnaires created with Webropol. All parents of under-aged children, about 450 people, were invited; 155 of them took part in the survey.</p> <p>The emphasis of the alumni survey, also conducted online, was put on the influence that the education at the German School had on their later life. Participants were invited by an attachment to the alumni newsletter, sent to all registered members. Out of about 500 members, 24 took part in the survey. The gathered data were analysed with Webropol and MS Excel.</p> <p>Information concerning teachers' satisfaction with the German School as their place of work was collected through qualitative research. A total of six voluntarily participating teachers were interviewed.</p> <p>The research revealed that the German School Helsinki has a good reputation among parents, alumni and teachers and that the majority of the participants would recommend it to other people.</p> <p>Nevertheless, there are some suggestions for improvement, which are explained in the discussion. In order to get an ongoing impression of the school's reputation it would be advisable to conduct similar research on a regular basis.</p>	
<p><b>Keywords</b> Reputation, educational institution, customer satisfaction</p>	

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# 1 Introduction

Image and reputation have crucial influence on the success of all kinds of companies and organizations. It is of significant importance to be aware of how you are seen in the eyes of your publics. Since images are always based on personal perceptions and interpretations they are not necessarily true. This means that it is useful to ask publics from time to time about the images they have of the organisation.

In the past such terms as reputation were only applied to big companies, but nowadays also non-profit organisations as e.g. schools have to be aware of the issue. A school with a good reputation easily attracts qualified teachers which has crucial influence on the quality of education and the satisfaction of parents and students.

The target organisation of this reputation analysis is the German School Helsinki situated in Malminkatu. Founded over 130 years ago its preliminary target was to give the children of poor German families the opportunity to get basic education. Today, over 80 % of the students are Finnish children and the school has become a place where two cultures meet. Its aim is to educate open-minded, independent, language-skilled individuals. The school differentiates from other schools in Finland in many ways. Its students graduate with the German A-level certificate (Abitur) which gives them the opportunity to apply to German as well as Finnish universities. On top of that some of the teachers come from Germany and are on a deployment lasting for a limited amount of time. This means that staff is changing every year.

The German School is partly financed through school fees. The satisfaction of the parents with the school is very important, because every child that leaves the school means a loss of money.

Alumni are part of this research, because they are the ones who can tell whether their education at the German School has prepared them well for studies and/or working life and whether they have taken any advantage of the German A-level certificate.

## **1.1 Objectives and research questions**

The main objective of the research is to give the management of the school an idea of how it is seen in the eyes of the chosen target groups, which are parents, alumni and teachers. The results are especially interesting for the German principal who started working for the school in August 2011.

The main research questions are:

- What images do parents, teachers and alumni have of the school?
  - Are parents satisfied customers?
  - Are teachers satisfied with their workplace/working environment?
  - Do parents think their children will benefit from the German “Abitur”, and do alumni think they have benefitted from it?
- Based on those images, what can be said about the reputation of the German School?

With the help of the research results the school management will be able to reflect upon, and possibly improve its operations.

## **1.2 Structure of the report**

The report is divided into the following parts: introduction, presentation of the target organisation, theory and empirical part. The theoretical part focuses on identity, image, reputation and customer satisfaction at a school.

In the empirical part the implementation of the research is explained, results are presented, research questions are answered and then ideas for further development and research are discussed.

## **2 The target organization – the German School Helsinki**

The German School Helsinki is one of 140 so called “Deutsche Auslandsschulen”, German Schools abroad. It is situated in Malminkatu 14 in Helsinki and when the research was conducted there were 644 students studying in classes one to twelve.

Founded 130 years ago, the school’s most important purpose was to give the children of poor German families the opportunity to obtain basic education. Today, about 80 % of the students are Finns and the aim of the school is to introduce Finnish and German language and culture to them and to educate independent, reliable, tolerant and respectful individuals.

The school consists of two branches. The German one is for students whose mother tongue is German or who speak the language fluently. The language of instruction is German. In the Finnish branch, the majority of subjects is taught in Finnish language, but the amount of German is continuously increased. Since 1998, the leaving certificate of both branches has been the German “Abitur”, the A-level certificate which gives students the opportunity to study at Finnish as well as at German universities.

### **2.1 Admittance of new students**

There is a tuition fee of 336,50 € per semester and children are admitted based on entrance examinations. In the past, the Finnish branch started only from the third grade onwards. In 2011, the new Finnish branch starting already in the first grade was introduced which had also influence on the entrance examination.

Children aiming to study in the German branch have to participate in a language test where especially the development of their German language skills is assessed. Primarily, students that have already attended the German pre-school are accepted.

According to the changed system of admittance, children applying to the Finnish branch participate in an own entrance examination.

It is also possible to enter the German School after having completed the nine-year lasting basic education at a Finnish school. Those students need to prove their German language skills.

## **2.2 Teachers**

All teachers are employees of the German School Helsinki. They are of Finnish or German origin, whereas most of the Germans are so called “Auslandsdienstlehrkräfte”, teachers from Germany teaching abroad. This means that they are normally teaching in Germany and hence employees of the Federal Republic of Germany. Teachers can apply for a deployment to a German School abroad. Those deployments normally last for a maximum period of six years.

The principal of the German School is always of German nationality and he has one Finnish and one German deputy. The current principal started his work in autumn 2011.

## **3 Publics, constituents & stakeholders**

In literature, the terms publics, constituents and stakeholders are often used interchangeably. Below there are several definitions showing that those concepts are closely linked to each other and that there are no major differences between them.

Members of a public have something in common, which means that the same problem or issue affects them. When an organisation’s actions affect several people, they become members of a public. (Grunig & Hunt 1984, 143.) A public can be considered a person or group of people that already has or could potentially have an interest in or effect on the organization (Kotler & Fox 2002, 20).

Depending on e.g. nature, size and location every organisation has a unique set of primary and secondary constituencies. Primary constituencies are e.g. employees, customers and shareholders; secondary constituencies could be the media, the government, suppliers, etc. Constituencies can change over time and one person can belong to several constituencies. (Argenti 2009, 33.)



Stakeholders of an organization are people or groups of people that are influenced by its actions (Davies, Chun, da Silva & Roper 2003, 58-59). Organisations have to deal with demands of stakeholders from inside as well as from outside of it. Those are e.g. employees and governments (Grunig A., Grunig J & Dozier, 2002, 2).

In this research the term public will be used to describe different groups of people that are influenced by or are able to affect the actions of an organisation.

Publics of an educational institution are e.g. parents of students, alumni faculty, staff, mass media, current and prospective students, legislature and government agencies and foundations. The aim of every educational institution should be to establish active relationships with most or even all of its publics. (Kotler and Fox 2002, 20.)

In Kotler & Fox's book (2002, 21) the term faculty refers to professors, teachers and other instructors, i.e. people delivering the school's educational services. In this research only the term teachers will be used to describe the personnel being responsible for lessons held at the school.

## **4 Corporate identity, image and reputation**

In the past, terms such as corporate communication, identity and image have only been applied to business organisations. Due to the fact that also public companies and non-profit organisations operate in competitive environments, it has become more important also for them to develop attractive images and present themselves well to their publics. (Riel & Fombrun 2007, 26.)

Identity, image, and reputation strategy is the most crucial part of every corporate communication function. In short, the reality of an organisation is represented by its identity, image describes the key publics' reflections based on the identity; and reputation is the sum of the views of all publics. (Argenti 2009, 54-55.) Chajet and Shachtman (1991, in Balmer & Greyser 2003, 211) state that image represents the publics' perceptions of the organization and identity is what the organization uses to influence those impressions.

## **4.1 Identity**

The concept of corporate identity relates to how an organisation is presenting and differentiating itself towards internal and external publics. It clarifies what the organisation is, what it does, how it does it and what its objectives are. (Schultz, Hatch & Larsen 2000, 13.) It is created by interaction of the organisation's members and influenced by e.g. history, rule books and employment conditions. It can be considered the glue holding the organisation together (Davies, Chun, da Silva & Roper 2003, 195.) and represents the reality of the corporation (Argenti 2009, 50). This means that identity building is the only part of reputation management that can be entirely controlled by the organisation itself. (Argenti 2009, 70.)

## **4.2 Image**

Image can be considered the sum of opinions and impressions somebody has of an object (Kotler and Fox 2002, 231). Thus the term image refers to the organisation as it is seen from the viewpoint of its publics. It is formed based on the messages sent by the organisation. (Argenti 2009, 54.), and can be considered a reflection of the identity (Riel & Fombrun 2007, 26.) Images are subjective perceptions of the reality which means that they are neither right nor wrong even though they do not correspond with the picture the organisation has of itself. (Vuokko 2003, 191.)

An educational institution's strong favourable image is created by performing well, generating satisfaction and letting publics know about it. A good image is of crucial importance to schools, since it affects their willingness to e.g. attend the school, recommend it to others or apply as a teacher. (Kotler & Fox 2002, 231.)

## **4.3 Reputation**

Reputation can be considered the sum of the viewpoints all publics have of the organisation. This means, that managing reputation entirely is impossible. (Argenti 2009, 55; 69.) Reputation is based on corporate identity, i.e. how the company sees itself and corporate image, i.e. how it is seen by its stakeholders (Aula & Mantere 2008, 35). The alignment of identity and image can be considered the foundation of a solid reputation. (Argenti 2009, 83.)

Good reputation has to be earned by reliable activities (Aula & Mantere 2008, 14). In order to manage its reputation a company should constantly take good care of its relations with its publics, whereas the two most important groups are employees and customers. They should be given the feeling that they are part of something unique and benefit from the relationship with the organisation. (Aula & Mantere 2008, 30-31.)

Corporate reputation is strongly influenced by employee satisfaction since happy workers are more productive and loyal to the company. Customer satisfaction, i.e. the fulfilment of a customer's needs and wants is another factor that has impact on corporate reputation. (Roper & Fill 2012, 42-43.)

According to Aula and Heinonen (2002, 36), reputation is formed by the organisation's operations, the experiences that are created by it and the images that are linked to it. For that reason it is not only the actions that matter, you also have to be able to tell people about your success.

Organisations' reputations are influenced by personal experiences, friends' and colleagues opinions on the organisation and mass media information. The most important source of influence is personal experience. (van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 46.)

A positive reputation strengthens the attractiveness of a company. It makes it easier to attract and retain customers and qualified employees. (van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 47-48.) Good reputation has crucial influence on job satisfaction and makes it easier for employees to identify themselves with the company they are working for and increases their productivity (Aula & Mantere 2008, 32-33.)

In reality reputation of an educational institution is often more important than its actual quality, since prospective students and employees use to choose their place to study or future employment based on assumptions and not based on experience.. (Garvin in Kotler and Fox 2002, 231.)

## 5 Customer Satisfaction at an educational institution

The customers of educational institutions are e.g. faculty, staff, alumni, students and donors. When dealing with the different customer groups, the school must try to identify their needs and expectations and think of ways how to meet them. (Kotler and Fox 2002, 24.) It should be the goal of every educational institution to have a lot of satisfied customers, no matter whether they are students, their parents, alumni or teachers (Seymour in Kotler & Fox 2002, 41).

Customer satisfaction is reached by determining factors that are important to the customers (needs) and fulfilling them. (Zeithaml 2006, 111.)

Customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction is based on experiences the customer gains when being in contact with the organization (its employees, products, services, etc.) and is closely linked to expectations. In every contact with stakeholders, experiences, and based on them experience- and satisfaction-based images of the institution are created. (Rope 2000, 537)

Also Kotler & Fox (2002, 42) state that the level of satisfaction depends on the difference between the expected and the perceived service performance.



Figure 1. According to Kotler & Fox (2002,42) customer satisfaction is influenced by expectations and experiences.

Customers of an educational institution form their expectations based on e.g. information received via word of mouth, previous experience and communications with the organization. Based on whether the organization's performance meets these expectations there are three levels of customer satisfaction. (Kotler and Fox 2002, 41-42.)

Table 1. Levels of customer satisfaction (Kotler and Fox 2002, 41)

Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Highly satisfied
Performance does not meet expectations	Performance meets expectations	Performance exceeds expectations

## 5.1 Satisfaction of parents

Schools that regularly conduct surveys among the parents will receive valuable information on what they consider the school's strengths and weaknesses. The results can help to improve the cooperation between school and home in order to achieve the common goal of providing a good learning environment to students. (Hoerr 2002, 38.)

Kleitzi and colleagues state that one factor parents consider when choosing the school for their child is convenience, i.e. the location of the school (Goldring & Philips 2008, 209). According to Schneider also school characteristics such as size, diversity and teaching value are important to some parents. (Goldring & Philips 2008, 213.)

When considering the right school for their children parents use interpersonal networks, i.e. friends, family members and neighbours as well as formal networks such as brochures and websites. (Schneider in Goldring and Philips 2008, 214.) According to Boyer, Wilson and Witte word of mouth is the most typical way parents find information on various school options (Goldring and Philips 2008, 214).

When analysing Finnish parents' satisfaction with the school of their children Rätty and Kasanen focused on the functioning of the school, which included e.g. the quality of teaching, the cooperation between school and parents, the parents' possibilities to influence school decision-making, how well children's individual characteristics are taken into account and how problems are solved. (Educational Studies 2007, 344.) Those factors were considered important also for this research.

Thomas R. Hoerr, in 2002 principal of the New City School in St. Louis has conducted parent surveys containing Likert-scale items and open-ended questions in order to

gather feedback on the functioning of the school. In those surveys parents are e.g. asked about:

- their reasons for choosing the school,
- the value and quality of parent-teacher conferences,
- how well they are informed about their child's progress, and
- how well the child's skills are taken into account in teaching.

He states that those topics have helped him to find out how parents see different aspects of his school. (Hoerr in Educational Leadership 2002, 38.)

A report on parents' satisfaction with schools published in the United Kingdom that contains results of 6958 surveys conducted between 2003 and 2005 revealed that parents' satisfaction stays in strong connection with the effectiveness of the school, handling of issues such as bullying and the quality of teaching. (Educational Journal Issue 93, 31.)

## **5.2 Teacher satisfaction**

The researcher used scientific literature in order to find out which factors have influence on teachers' satisfaction with their job and their place to work.

Teachers' attitude and motivation has major influence on their teaching and thus affects the students (Ruzicka in Vail 2005, 4). Psychologists state that teacher job satisfaction can even have influence on the mental health of teachers and students (Xiaofu & Qiwen 2007, 65).

To guarantee a good quality of teaching, schools need to retain qualified teachers. Their workplace satisfaction has major influence on their willingness to stay at one school. (Perrachione, Rosser & Petersen 2008, 1-2.)

According to the need theory, employee job satisfaction is influenced by the match between individual needs and the characteristics of the job (Bolin 2007, 48). There is

no general definition on teacher job satisfaction existing, but it can be assumed that it is related to empowerment, working with children, independence and on how their work is perceived by other people. Dissatisfied teachers often struggle with work overload and a lack of appreciation of their work by colleagues and school management. (Zembylas & Papanastasiou 2005, 433-436.) Therefore it is important that the school management aims for a good work place climate. Teachers should be given the opportunity to take part in decision making. They should be able to take influence on the decisions that affect their work and be able to try new ideas concerning e.g. the planning of their lessons. On top of that, the school management should show teachers that it appreciates their work by giving positive feedback and ask them about their opinions on regular basis (Vail 2005, 5-11.)

According to Perrachione, Rosser and Petersen (2008) research on job satisfaction has revealed that the three major influences on job satisfaction are demographic variables, job role-related characteristics (e.g. the amount of leadership support received), and work experiences. In the field of work experience teachers that had the opportunity to collaborate with their colleagues were more satisfied than those who did not have this possibility.

Job satisfaction in general is also influenced by communication satisfaction. Pincus (1986 in Juholin 1999, 47) found out that especially communication with supervisors, personal feedback and communication climate hat major influence on employees' satisfaction with their workplace.

## 6 Implementation of the research

Basis of the research is Kotler and Fox's assumption that among others parents, alumni and teachers can be considered customers of an educational institution (Kotler and Fox 2002, 24) and that every school should be striving for a large number of satisfied customers (Seymour in Kotler & Fox 2002, 46).

Customer satisfaction is strongly connected to the expectations they have regarding an organisation and how their needs and wants are fulfilled. In order to analyse the needs of the chosen interest groups, the researcher used scientific literature introduced in the theoretical part.

To analyse the satisfaction of the parents and the opinions of the alumni quantitative research was used, because the researcher aimed to reach as many people as possible. It was important to create good questionnaires the characteristics of which are e.g. :

- a clear structure
- answering instructions are clear and unequivocal
- only one item is analysed at a time
- questions proceed in a logical way
- questions are numbered
- questions dealing with the same topic are grouped under clear headings
- in the beginning there are simple questions
- it gives the participant the feeling that his answers are important
- it is easy to analyse with the help of computer programmes. (Heikkilä 2010, 33, 48-49)

When investigating the satisfaction of teachers with the German School Helsinki as their working place qualitative research, i.e. interviews was used in order to get more detailed information and the opportunity to e.g. compare the viewpoints of teachers from Finland and Germany.



## 6.1 Parents

An online questionnaire was used to ask the parents about their satisfaction with the German School Helsinki. The most important areas of interest were:

- factors that have influenced the school choice for their children
- sources of information they have used to get information on the school
- the satisfaction with the communication and information exchange between the school and the parents
- the quality of the school’s Internet pages
- the satisfaction with the quality of teaching and the teachers
- the advantages of the German “Abitur” certificate.

When designing the research, several scientific articles concerning parents’ school choice and satisfaction with the school of their children were used. The articles are based on surveys and research conducted in Finland, the UK and the USA and the aim of the researcher was to find out what factors should be analysed. Due to the limited time frame and the aim to create a questionnaire that can be answered within a short amount of time, not all issues could be taken into account in the actual research.

The data gathering was conducted by online questionnaires designed with Webropol from 10 April to 14 April 2012. In order to give every parent the opportunity to answer the questions in his mother tongue, there were a Finnish and a German version available. Appendix 1 shows the German and appendix 2 the Finnish version of the questionnaire.

In order to get as representative results as possible all parents of underage children, were invited to take part in the survey by a message sent out via Wilma, the application the German School Helsinki uses as a means of communication between teachers and parents. All in all about 450 parents were given the opportunity to participate.

Before starting the research the content of the questionnaire was discussed with and later on approved by the school management. The invitation (appendices 3 and 4) was

sent out in Finnish and German and contained the link to the questionnaire. The fact that it would be part of a Bachelor's Thesis was only mentioned at the end of the letter, because it was considered more important to first make the parents understand that by participating they would be able to influence the future of the German School and not just support the work of a student.

The questionnaire (appendices 1 in German and 2 in Finnish) consisted of Likert-scale items as well as open-ended questions. The content is based on the theory concerning satisfaction of parents described in chapter five and conversations with the principal of the German School Helsinki. The chapter revealed, that e.g. the functioning of a school has major influence on parents' satisfaction with it.

Questions one to three were background questions that asked the participants for their nationality as well as the branch and grade their children studied in.

In question four, Factors that influenced the school choice, parents were asked to evaluate the following factors on a Likert-scale from four (had strong influence) to one (had no influence):

- location
- recommendation of a friend/relative
- own studies completed at the school
- the German "Abitur" certificate
- the teaching of the German language and culture
- afternoon activities for children from grade 1 to 4

On top of that, an open ended option where parents could name other factors was included. Of special importance to the principal was to find out whether the opportunity of after school care for students of classes one to four had influenced the parents' school choice.

In question five, Sources of information concerning the German School, parents were asked to evaluate four possible sources on a Likert-scale from four (was very useful) to

zero (was not useful) and they were given the opportunity to name sources that were not mentioned. The given sources were the following:

- friends/relatives
- the school's web pages
- "open house" presentation
- personal visit.

In questions six to ten participants were asked to evaluate statements concerning the German School on a Likert-scale from four (strongly agree) to one (strongly disagree). They could also choose “zero” for statements they were not able or willing to evaluate. The purpose of only four options was to force those participants who evaluated the statements to either agree or disagree.

Question six dealt with the teaching at the German School Helsinki. It contained of seven items that asked parents to evaluate whether they thought that teachers take their child’s skills to a sufficient extent into account, lessons were diversified, class-size was adequate, teachers were professionals, teachers were friendly and eager to help, grading was fair and whether the amount of homework was adequate.

In question seven the participants evaluated the exchange of information between them and the school. With five statements they were asked whether parent-teacher conferences were useful, whether they received enough information concerning the progress of their child as well as possible problems, whether it was easy to contact teachers when needed and whether they thought they were given the opportunity to participate in school decision-making.

The 8<sup>th</sup> question dealt with the leaving certificate of the German School, the “Abitur”. This part was of special importance to the school principal. The three statements that parents were asked to evaluate dealt with the impact of the certificate on the students’ future. Does it prepare them well for future studies and working life and do parents think their child will take advantage of the “Abitur” when looking for a job?

The three statements given in question nine were concerning the school's web pages. Participants were asked to evaluate whether the pages were easy to use, contained all important information and whether the German and the Finnish version were of the same good quality.

Question ten was the last Likert-scale question and contained of only one statement which was "All in all I am totally satisfied with the German School Helsinki".

In the second last questions parents were asked whether they would recommend the German School to other people and they were given the opportunity to give reasons for their answer.

The last question was open and participants were given the possibility to write about their ideas, wishes, praise and critics.

## **6.2 Alumni**

The alumni are an important interest group when assessing the quality of an educational institution. They can be considered consumers that are able to evaluate whether they have been well prepared for working life. (Corrigan 2011, 34-35.)

The survey among the alumni was conducted online from 8 May to 22 May 2012. The questionnaire was designed with Webropol and available in Finnish and German. Participants were invited by an attachment (appendices 7 in German and 8 in Finnish) to the alumni newsletter released in May 2012. The newsletter was sent out to all members registered to the alumni data base, which contains about 500 names.

The most important aim, set in accordance with the school principal was to find out whether the alumni considered that the education at the German School Helsinki had prepared them well for studies and working life. Those participants whose leaving certificate is the German "Abitur" were asked to evaluate possible advantages when searching for a job.

In the beginning of the questionnaire (appendices 5 in German and 6 in Finnish) there were four background questions concerning the participants' current place of residence, the years they had spent at the German School Helsinki, the branch they had studied in and their leaving certificate.

In question five, the alumni were asked to evaluate five statements concerning their time at the German School and the quality of education with the help of a Likert-scale ranging from four (strongly agree) to one (strongly disagree). Participants were asked whether they had enjoyed studying at the German School, whether the school had prepared them well for future studies and working life, whether they had benefitted from the German "Abitur" when looking for a job and whether they would choose the German School again.

Question six was open ended and gave the participants the opportunity to clarify and comment on possible advantages the German "Abitur" had provided them when they were looking for a job.

As well as the parents, the alumni were asked whether they would recommend the school to other people (question seven) and they were given the opportunity to give comments, suggest improvements, etc. (question eight).

### **6.3 Teachers**

The teacher interviews' areas of interest were their satisfaction with the German School as their working place, their perception of the school's reputation and their satisfaction with the communication at the school. The questions are based on the theory concerning teacher satisfaction described in chapter five which revealed e.g. that satisfied teachers consider that their work is appreciated by the school management and parents. On top of that they have the opportunity to collaborate with their colleagues and plan their lessons independently.

The researcher's aim was to get honest opinions from voluntarily participating teachers. The principal offered the opportunity to present the project at a teachers' conference held in the beginning of April 2012. The researcher explained the idea in Finnish

and German to the around 60 participating teachers and circulated a list where people interested in participating could fill in their contact information. Thus, the school management had no influence on the choosing process of interviewees and did not see the list.

All in all, six teachers were interviewed between April and May 2012 in the school premises. Three of them were of German and three of Finnish nationality. The interviews were held with one person at a time and in order to make the situation convenient for every participant they were interviewed in their mother tongue. With the approval of the teachers, every interview was recorded to facilitate a detailed analysis. Before each interview it was repeated that comments would be analysed anonymously and that the school management would not receive any information on the participants.

During the interviews the researcher tried to find out:

- what teachers thought about the reputation of the school inside as well as outside of it
- how satisfied teachers were with the communication at the school
- whether teachers received enough support from colleagues and the school management, and
- whether teachers would recommend the German School as a place to work and as a place to study in.

The interviews started with background questions which were:

- How long have you been working as a teacher?
- Have you been teaching in other schools in Finland or Germany before?
- If yes, in which of the two countries?

Those participants that had been teaching at other schools before were asked whether they had recognized any significant differences between their previous working places and the German School Helsinki.

The actual interview was conducted focusing on the following topics:

- reputation of the school
- work place climate
- communications and decision-making
- support received by school management and colleagues
- general workplace satisfaction
- recommending the school to parents and other teachers
- comments, improvement suggestions, etc.

The researcher asked every participant to talk about perceptions on the schools' reputation among the employees as well as how it is considered outside of it. On top of that they had to reflect on what they considered the aims and values of the German School.

The following part dealt with work place climate and teachers were asked whether they considered themselves as an equal member of staff and whether they had good relationships towards their colleagues. Since there are teachers of two nationalities, the researcher wanted to find out whether the participants considered the staff as a unity or whether there were two separated groups.

Regarding communication teachers were asked whether they had the opportunity to influence decision-making and whether they received information influencing their work on time. On top of that the researcher wanted to find out whether the teacher conferences are considered useful and organized in a professional way. The term conference refers to those meetings that all teachers are invited to participate in. Since they are basically held in German but partly translated into Finnish it was also important to ask whether there had ever occurred any language barriers.

The following part focused on the participants' perception on how much support they receive from school management and colleagues, whether they felt that their work was appreciated by the school management and the parents, whether class size was appropriate and whether the school offered enough material and technical device to arrange lessons according to their wishes.

Afterwards employees were asked to estimate their overall satisfaction with the German School as their place to work on a scale from one to ten.

As well as parents and alumni, also the teachers were asked whether they would recommend the school to others. In their case the question was divided into two parts, which were “Would you recommend the German School to other teachers?” and “Would you recommend the German School to parents?”

Before finishing the interview, participants were given the opportunity to give comments, suggest improvements, etc.

## **7 Results of the questionnaire surveys**

In the following chapter the results of the surveys conducted as quantitative research will be analysed. First there will be all necessary information concerning the satisfaction of the parents and after this the results of the alumni survey are presented. With the help of Webropol, the researcher got the results of the German and the Finnish version in two separated files. Microsoft Excel was used to calculate the results in total, draw figures, and to add additional columns to the tables.

### **7.1 Parents**

This part will deal with the results concerning the survey conducted online among the parents during 11.4. – 27.4.2012.

First the researcher will present the answers to the background questions concerning nationality of the respondents as well as branch and grade their children had attended to. Hereafter the results concerning the school choice and satisfaction of the parents with the German School will be analysed and in the last part some of the answers to the final open question will be presented.

All in all there were 155 respondents, which means that about one third of the invited parents took part in the survey.



### 7.1.1 Background questions

As from figure two can be seen, 92% of the respondents were of German and/or Finnish nationality. The majority of the parents who filled in the questionnaire, namely 58%, were Finns. Other nationalities represented in the survey are e.g. Austrian and French.

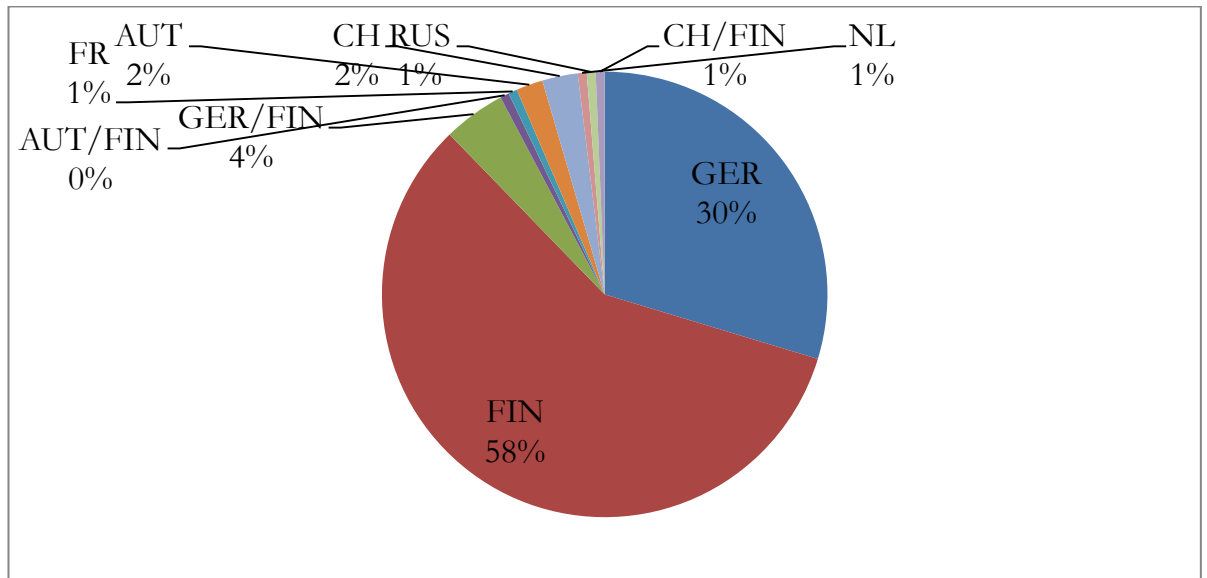


Figure 2. The nationalities of the survey participants

The majority of the children whose parents took part in the survey had attended the German branch.

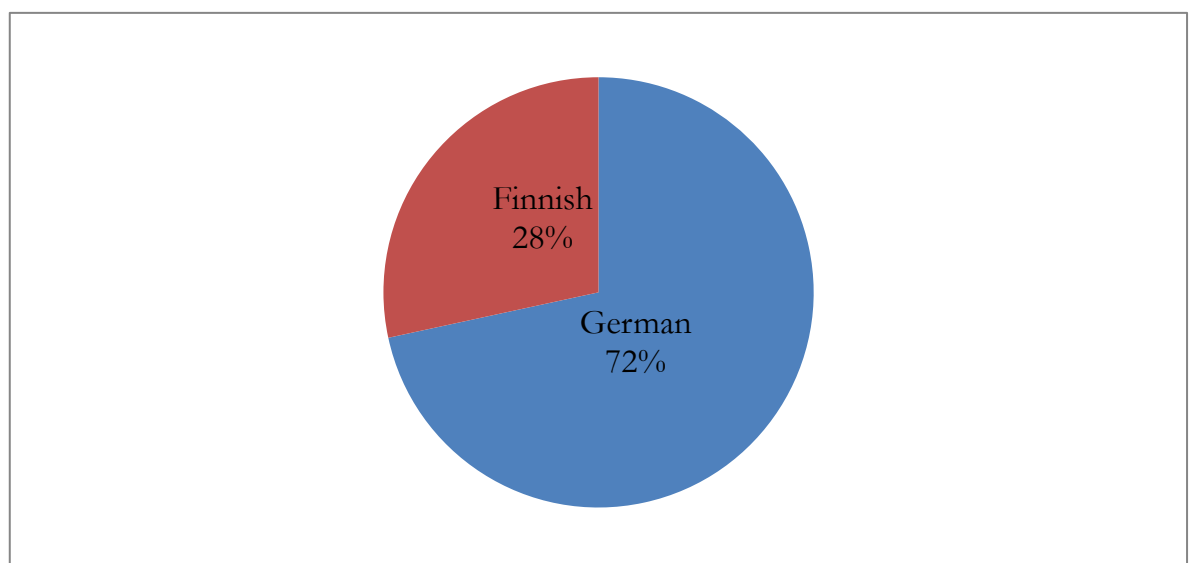


Figure 3. The branch which the respondents' children attended

All in all there were 180 children represented in the survey. The number of children was bigger than the number of parents due to the fact that some families had several children studying at the German school.

Table 2. The grades that the children of the participants attended in numbers

Grade	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	Sum
Number of children	31	14	25	15	26	14	13	13	13	9	6	1	180

One can notice that parents, whose children started school in autumn 2011 and were just about to finish the first grade when the research was conducted, were the most active respondents. All in all 31 parents, i.e 17% had children in the first grade. Another group of active respondents were parents having children in the fifth grade.

Children attending other grades were represented quite equally. Since the survey was not sent to parents who had children in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade, there is only one response of a parent who obviously had several children studying at the German School.

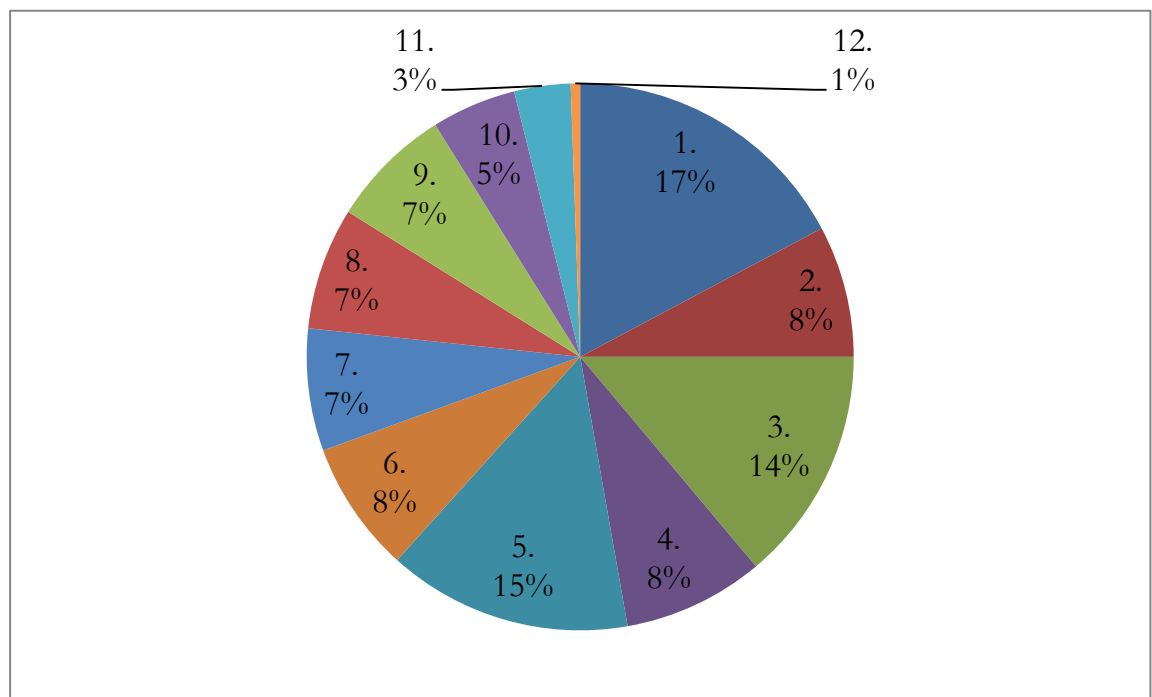


Figure 4. The grade the participants' children attended in percentages

### 7.1.2 Factors that influenced the school choice

In the following table there are factors listed that possibly influenced parents' school choice. Participants were asked to evaluate their importance on a scale from five to one. Five meant that the factor was of big importance, one meant that it had no influence.

Table 3. Factors that had influence on the parents' school choice (5 = was very important; 1 = was not important at all)

	5	4	3	2	1	Sum	Average	% im- portant	% not im- portant
<b>Location</b>	23	22	38	23	44	150	2,71	29%	43%
<b>Recommendation of a friend/relative</b>	7	14	27	19	81	148	1,97	14%	65%
<b>I have attended the school myself</b>	12	1	5	9	115	142	1,49	8%	80%
<b>The German "Abitur" certificate</b>	30	19	32	16	51	148	2,74	32%	43%
<b>The teaching of the German language and culture</b>	108	28	8	3	5	152	4,52	88%	5%
<b>Afternoon activities for children from grade 1 to 4</b>	28	29	25	17	48	147	2,81	37%	42%
<b>Something else. What?</b>	51	8	4	0	10	73	4,23	38%	6%

The last two columns of table three are more significant than the "Average"-column. They are calculated as follows: parents that chose option "5" or "4" are combined under the column "% had influence", and those who chose either "2" or "1" represent the column "% not important". From those last two columns one can see that the teaching of the German language and culture was the most important factor of influence to the participants.

The location was not of significant importance, which is due to the fact that there is only one German School in the whole Helsinki area. This might cause long school ways to some students. Some parents even mentioned that the location had almost prevented them from sending their child to the German School.

Factors that were mentioned under the open ended question “Something else” were e.g.

- The child had started school in Germany and then the family moved to Finland.
- The family is bilingual.
- The school’s reputation is good.
- It is not necessary to change schools, since there are grades one to twelve.
- There are music lessons offered in the afternoon.
- Classes are small.
- Teachers are motivated.
- The school has a high quality standard, tradition and conveys important values.
- There was a good impression gained during the open house event.

### 7.1.3 Sources of information concerning the German School

In this question parents were asked to evaluate the usefulness of sources of information concerning the German School. It can be clearly seen that the most helpful means were the school’s web pages and a personal visit.

Table 4. Importance of sources of information concerning the German School (5 = has helped a lot; 1 = did not help at all)

	5	4	3	2	1	Sum	Average	% has helped	% has not helped
<b>Friends/relatives</b>	13	20	22	21	66	142	2,25	21%	56%
<b>The school's web pages</b>	49	45	31	13	12	150	3,71	61%	16%
<b>"Open house" presentation</b>	43	40	23	10	27	143	3,43	54%	24%
<b>Personal visit</b>	55	40	18	7	18	138	3,78	61%	16%
<b>Other source? Which?</b>	25	4	0	0	9	38	3,95	19%	6%

The most important source mentioned by the parents themselves was the German day care in Lauttasaari. On top of that e.g. a leaflet received via mail, conversations with teachers and the German Embassy were said to be useful.

### 7.1.4 The teaching at the German School

In this section parents' satisfaction with the teaching at the German School was analysed by letting them evaluate positive statements on a Likert scale from four (totally agree) to one (totally disagree). There was also the opportunity to choose "cannot be evaluated" in case the participants were not able or willing to answer the question.

In the table showing the results, participants ticking option four or three are combined under the column "% agree" and those ticking two or one are represented in the column "% disagree". This means that participants that did not answer the question or chose the option "cannot be evaluated" had no influence on the values of those two columns.

Table 5. The parents' opinion on the quality of teaching at the German School (4= totally agree; 3 = partly agree; 2 = partly disagree; 1 = totally disagree)

	4	3	2	1	Total	Average	% agree	% disagree
<b>Teaching takes my child's skills to a sufficient extent into consideration</b>	32	94	19	3	148	3	85%	15%
<b>Lessons are diversified</b>	47	87	10	1	145	3,2	92%	8%
<b>The class-size is adequate</b>	88	51	10	4	153	3,5	91%	9%
<b>Teachers are professionals</b>	57	78	14	3	152	3,2	89%	11%
<b>Teachers are friendly and eager to help</b>	64	79	11	3	157	3,3	91%	9%
<b>Grading is fair</b>	31	65	25	3	124	3	77%	23%
<b>The amount of homework is adequate</b>	49	79	19	3	150	3,2	85%	15%

One can clearly see that overall the parents answering the questions were quite satisfied with the teaching at the German School since 85% of them agreed with the statement that their child's skills were taken into consideration. Over 90 % thought that the class-size was adequate, lessons diversified and teachers friendly and eager to help.

The statement concerning the fairness of grading was evaluated by only 124 of 155 participants. Over 80 % of them considered that grading was fair.

### 7.1.5 Exchange of information between school and parents

One important factor influencing parents' satisfaction with the school of their child is the amount of information they receive concerning its development, possible problems etc. Also in this section participants were asked to evaluate statements on a Likert-scale from four to one.

Table 6. Parents' satisfaction with the exchange of information between them and the school (4= totally agree; 3 = partly agree; 2 = partly disagree; 1 = totally disagree)

	4	3	2	1	Total	Average	% agree	% disagree
<b>Parent-teacher conferences at the German school are useful and provide me with important information</b>	65	82	7	0	154	3,38	95%	5%
<b>I receive sufficient information concerning the progress of my child</b>	41	71	37	7	156	2,94	72%	28%
<b>I receive information concerning problems of my child early enough</b>	39	54	31	8	132	2,94	70%	30%
<b>When needed it is easy to contact teachers</b>	93	54	7	0	154	3,56	95%	5%
<b>I am given the opportunity to influence decision-making at the school</b>	8	40	54	15	117	2,35	41%	59%

Almost all respondents agreed with the statement that parent-teacher conferences were useful and provided them with important information and thought that it was easy to contact the teachers if needed. The majority of the participating parents stated that they received enough information concerning their child's/children's development.

Only 117 of 155 participants evaluated the statement concerning their ability to influence decision-making at the school. It can be assumed that the others are not interested in taking influence or have not tried it.

### 7.1.6 The school's leaving certificate, the German "Abitur"

When looking at the results of the question concerning the German School's leaving certificate, it can be assumed that parents did not have enough information concerning the advantages of the "Abitur", since only 66% of all participants evaluated the questions referring to its influence on the future of their children.

However, the majority of those parents who evaluated the statement thought that their children would be well prepared for future studies and working life and that the "Abitur" would be an advantage on the job market.

Table 7. Participants' opinions on the German "Abitur" (4= totally agree; 3 = partly agree; 2 = partly disagree; 1 = totally disagree)

	4	3	2	1	Total	Average	% agree	% disagree
<b>The German "Abitur" prepares my child well for future studies</b>	52	44	4	2	102	3,53	94%	6%
<b>The German "Abitur" prepares my child well for working life</b>	31	53	10	5	99	3	85%	15%
<b>My child will take advantage of the German "Abitur" when looking for a job</b>	39	47	8	3	97	3,16	89%	11%

### 7.1.7 The school's web pages

Nowadays, web pages are an important means of communication for all kinds of organisations. The parents of the students of the German School were asked about the quality of its web pages, their user-friendliness and the information they contained.

Table 8. The parents' satisfaction with the school's web pages (4= totally agree; 3 = partly agree; 2 = partly disagree; 1 = totally disagree)

	4	3	2	1	Total	Average	% agree	% disagree
<b>The school's web pages are easy to use</b>	48	85	15	6	154	3,14	86%	14%
<b>The school's web pages contain all important information</b>	44	94	12	1	151	3,2	91%	9%
<b>The German and the Finnish version are of the same good quality</b>	32	32	15	1	81	3,15	79%	20%

The vast majority of parents supported the statement that the web pages of the German School were easy to use and contained all important information.

Whether the German and the Finnish version of the web pages were of the same good quality could only be evaluated by those participants who speak both languages and use both versions. For this reason, only 81 participants evaluated the last statement; 79 % of them agreed with it.

### 7.1.8 Overall satisfaction with the German School Helsinki

From the results of the statement concerning the overall satisfaction of the parents with the German School one can see that the vast majority, namely 90 % was satisfied. Only 3 participants totally disagreed with the statement.

Table 9. Parents' overall satisfaction with the German School (4= totally agree; 3 = partly agree; 2 = partly disagree; 1 = totally disagree)

	4	3	2	1	Total	Average	% agree	% disagree
<b>All in all I am totally satisfied with the German School Helsinki</b>	72	67	12	3	154	3,35	90%	10%



### **7.1.9 Would participants recommend the German School to others/have they already done so?**

Almost 90 % of the participants would recommend the German School to other people or have already done so. This result goes hand in hand with the previous question concerning the general satisfaction with the school.

It was also possible to give reasons for recommending or not recommending the school. All in all, about 30 participants gave reasons for recommending it. The most frequently mentioned factors were:

- overall satisfaction
- the fact that language skills are always an advantage
- the good quality of teaching
- the fact that the child is having a good time at school
- the small classes
- the high-quality equipment.

About ten participants commented on facts that could prevent them from recommending the school to others. The most frequent ones were the following:

- the difficult location
- the too small school yard
- too small amount of handcraft lessons.

### **7.1.10 Open question**

At the end of the questionnaire parents had the opportunity to give feedback. They praised, criticized and wrote about wishes and proposals for the future.

There were some general, positive comments where the parents expressed their satisfaction with the school. They emphasized that it felt good to take their children to the

school, that the children enjoyed studying there and that the atmosphere and the small classes were huge advantages of the school.

*„Allgemein ist die Deutsche Schule eine tolle Schule für unsere Kinder und wir können allen nur gratulieren zu dem Erreichten.“*

*”Kolmas lapsemme käy nyt koulua, enkä ole heistä kenenkään koskaan kuullut haukkuvan koulua. Motivaatiota on aina löytynyt eikä koskaa ole aamulla kuulunut, ettei halua mennä kouluun jostain syystä. Nämä ovat minulle sellaisia signaaleja, että koulu on hyvä. Toinen asia on, että kaikki ongelmajutut, joihin olemme vuosien saatossa törmänneet, ovat hoituneet ammattitaitoisesti ja mukavalla tavalla - ainakin meidän kokemuksen mukaan.”*

*”Koulun ilmapiiri on lämmin ja kotoinen, sinne vie lapsensa mielellään; lapsista kehitetty aktiivista, toiset huomioon ottavia yksilöitä”*

On top of that participants appreciated the cooperation of parents and teachers and among the parents themselves when e.g. organising class trips and events.

*”Hyviä puolia pienen koulun ”tuntu”, kaikki tuntevat toisensa ja luokat pysyvät periaatteessa yhtenäisinä viimeiselle luokalle saakka. Vanhemmat yleensä aktiivisia, paljon yhteistä toimintaa (luokkaretket ym).”*

The small school yard was criticized by some participants because it does not offer enough opportunities for sports activities.

Some parents thought that 8.45 was too early to start school especially for small children, since several of them had a long way to school.

Comments concerning teachers were basically positive and appreciated the work and motivation of the school staff. One parent was really satisfied with the flexibility of the teachers. His/her child could not attend lessons because of a sports event, but they got all the assignments and homework via Wilma so that the child did not miss anything.

*”Joustavuus ja yhteistyö opettajien kanssa yleensä hyvä, urheilun takia poissaolojen aikaiset tehtävät on saanut hienosti Wilman avulla osalta opettajilta.”*

On the other hand, in a few parents' opinion the approval of absences outside the holidays was too difficult and teachers of the German school are not as flexible as teachers in Finnish schools.

The most frequent criticism concerning teachers was that teachers change too often. This is due to the fact that teachers from Germany are employees of the Federal Republic of Germany that work abroad for a limited time. Parents thought that especially for first graders it would be important to have a class teacher that does not leave after one or two years.

Concerning the teaching and lessons at the German School participants especially appreciated the good quality of teaching, the demanding curricula, the supporting of bilingualism and the excellent lessons in natural sciences.

Several parents thought that the amount of handcraft lessons was too small and did not like the fact that they end after two years, whereas in Finnish schools there are seven years of handcraft teaching.

On top of that a few participants doubted that the German curriculum prepared their children well enough for studies in Finland and entrance examinations at Universities. They wished that some elements of Finnish curricula could be included in teaching at the German School.

Some parents stated that the books used at the German School are outdated, not interesting and do not motivate the students to study.

When thinking of activities, many parents thanked for the excellent after-school care club that is offered for children in grades one to four. They especially emphasized that the music school is of very good quality.

One point that was criticized was that there were not enough sports activities offered. One parent was disappointed about the fact that the foundation of a floor ball club was not possible because of too much bureaucracy.

*”Ainoa moite tulee siitä, että poikien salibandy kerhon perustaminen käytännössä kaatui byrokratiaan. Muissa kouluissa oppilaat pelaavat vanhempien vastuulla ja suostumuksella, sekä ottavat tarvittaessa vakuutuksen lapsen tapaturmien varalta. Nyt asiasta tehtiin tarpeettoman moniputkaista.”*

Related to communications one parent appreciated the fact that the Finnish version of the web pages had been improved since the previous year.

*”Vielä viime vuonna suomenkieliset nettisivut sisälsivät paljon vanhaa tietoa jotka olivat kuitenkin ajantasaiset saksankielisillä sivuilla, mutta tänä vuonna on selvästi skarpattu!”*

In addition to that parents were basically satisfied with the exchange of information via Wilma. On the other hand some participants criticized the fact that some teachers are unable to use this means of communication. One Finnish parent that does not speak German stated that all messages should be translated, which, according to him/her, was not the case.

Since the school year 2011/2012, the system of student admittance to the school was changed. Several parents criticized this new solution:

*”Entinen haku suomalaisen linjan kolmannelle luokalle oli parempi, koska koe mittasi lapsen osaamista ja kiinnostusta paremmin. Lapsi myös oli kypsempi pitempiin koulupäiviin sekä hankalampaan koulumatkaan. Toisluokkalainen lapsi pystyi myös itse jo vaikuttamaan koulupäätökseen, kun taas eskarilainen ei pysty. Nykyinen valintamenettely ei myöskään ota huomioon perheitä, mikäli joku lapsista ei onnistu pääsykokeessa. Aikaisemmin oli myös sisaruspisteet sekä mahdollisuus hakea uudelleen seuraavana vuotena. Nykyinen tilanne asettaa sekä sisarukset eriarvoiseen*

*asemaan että hankaloittaa perheiden tilannetta, mikäli lapset joutuvat eri kouluihin (eri loma-ajat, lauantaikoulupäivät, vanhempainillat).”*

About 30 participants expressed wishes concerning the future work of the school or tried to suggest improvements.

The most frequently mentioned topic was the difficult way to school, since there are several dangerous crossroads right in front of it. Parents wished that the school could, in cooperation with them and the city of Helsinki, try to find solutions to make those streets safer.

When thinking of activities it seemed important to the parents that a handcraft club could be offered in the evenings, since those skills are not that much taught during regular lessons.

Concerning teachers, Finnish parents suggested that new teachers from Germany get some kind of “coaching” in Finnish culture and behaviour at Finnish schools, since some of them are, according to the parents, too strict and do not understand the fact that in Finland parents participate actively in school life.

Two participants even suggested an improvement of the marketing of the German School:

*”DSH:n markkinoinnissa pitäisi tuoda esille poikkeuksellisen laadukkaasta ja laajaa luonnontieteiden opetusta sekä pieniä luokkakokoja, erityisesti lukiossa. Viime syksyn luokkamme vanhempainillan perusteella sanoisin, että luokanvalvojen tulisi kertoa vanhempainilloissa jo esim. 8-luokalta alkaen Reifeprüfungin yleisestä korkeakoulukelpoisuudesta Suomessa. Se, ettei lukio ole luokaton eikä valinnaisaineiden kirjo ole suuri, ei ole kaikkien mielestä negatiivinen asia. Viestiä voi kertoa positiivisesti siitä, kuinka oppilaat tuntevat toisensa, koska eivät ole jokaisella kursilla eri ihmisten seurassa, ja koska valinnaisia aineita on vähän, oppilaat todella oppivat ne asiat, joita opiskellaan.”*

*”Lisätäkää nettisivuille kohta: ”miksi Saksalaiseen kouluun” , johon suomenkielisille perustellaan esim: kulttuuri ja kielitaito, kohtaamiskoulu, ainevaihtoehdot (ei vain kielikoulu, myös tiedeaineet kunnossa!), pääsy korkeakouluun samalla viivalla suomalaisten kanssa. Saksankielisille/saksalaisille omat perustelut: pääsee sekä Saksaan että Suomeen opiskelemaan, yms. Lisäksi näkyvämpi käyrä/ taulukko opiskeluun / työhön sijoittumisesta koulun jälkeen. Vanhemmilla ei ole tästä tietoa, vaikka tiedot ovat olemassa. Suomalaisille ”markkinoidaan” koulu esikoulun aikana ennen 1. luokan alkua, toisen kerran 9. luokan aikana lukiovalinnan kohdalla.”*

## 7.2 Alumni

In this chapter the results of the alumni survey conducted online from 8.5. – 22.5.2012 with Webropol will be discussed. The focus of the survey was the reflection of the time as a student of the German School Helsinki and to find out whether participants had benefitted from the education at the school. All in all, there were 24 survey participants out of about 500 invited people that had attended the school between 1959 and 2009.

### 7.2.1 Background information

The vast majority of the participants, i.e. 20 people lived in Finland, two in Germany, one in Belgium and one in Costa Rica.

Since the Finnish and the German branch were introduced in 1985, the option ”There have not been branches yet” was included. The majority of the alumni answering the questionnaire had started school between the 1950’s and 70’s and so they chose that answer. Five people had attended the German, and four people the Finnish branch.

Table 10 Branch the participants studied in (numbers)

German branch	5
Finnish branch	4
there have not been branches yet	15

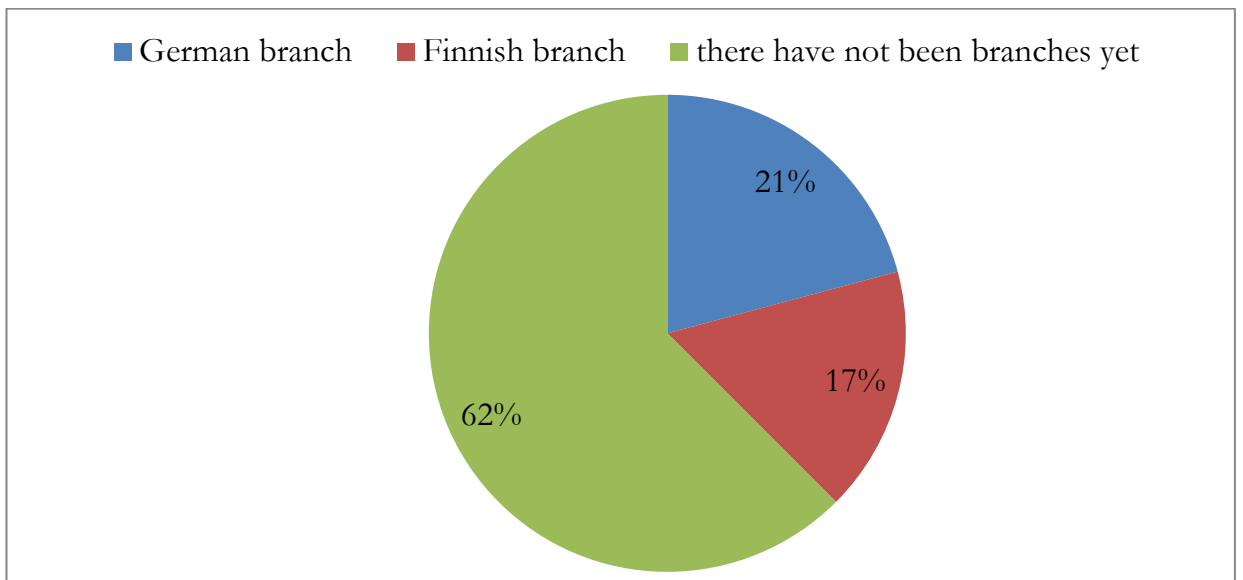


Figure 5. Branch the participants studied in (percentages)

Since 1998, the only leaving certificate of the German School Helsinki is the German "Abitur", in the years before that students were able to choose between the "Abitur" and the Finnish "ylioppilastutkinto" and could even leave the school with both certificates.

The option "With none of them" was included for those participants that had left the school before graduation, due to e.g. a move to Germany. Based on comments the participants gave, some that had graduated with both certificates chose that option as well.

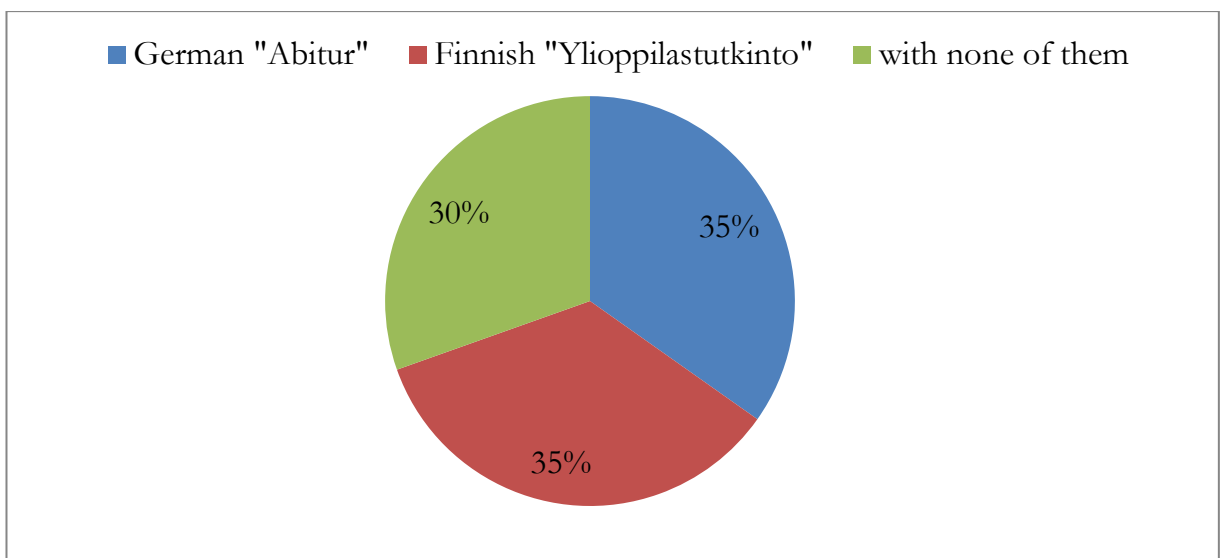


Figure 6. Certificate participants left the German School with (percentages)

Table 11 Certificate participants left the German School with (numbers)

German "Abitur"	8
Finnish "Ylioppilastutkinto"	8
with none of them	7

## 7.2.2 Satisfaction with the German School

With the help of five Likert-scale items, the alumni were asked to reflect on their time as a student of the German School Helsinki. Under "% agree", people that chose the options "totally agree" or "partly agree" are combined; "% disagree" represents alumni ticking options "partly disagree" or "totally disagree".

Table 12. Alumni's reflection on their time at the German School (4= totally agree; 3 = partly agree; 2 = partly disagree; 1 = totally disagree)

	4	3	2	1	Total	Average	% agree	% disagree
<b>I enjoyed studying at the German School Helsinki</b>	10	9	4	0	23	3,26	83%	17%
<b>The German School has prepared me well for future studies</b>	13	10	1	0	24	3,50	96%	4%
<b>The German School has prepared me well for working life</b>	7	10	5	2	24	2,92	71%	29%
<b>I benefitted from the German "Abitur" when looking for a job</b>	6	5	2	2	15	3,00	73%	27%
<b>With the benefit of hindsight, I would choose the German School again</b>	13	8	1	0	22	3,55	95%	5%

The majority of participants stated that they had enjoyed their time as a student of the German School, none of the participants disagreed totally with that statement.

One can notice that even though almost all participants thought that the German School had prepared them well for their studies, the amount of alumni agreeing with the fact that their education had prepared them well for working life is much smaller.



None of the participants totally disagreed with the statement that with the benefit of hindsight, he would choose the German School again. The vast majority agreed at least partly with that statement.

Over half of the alumni that took part in the survey stated that they had benefitted from the German "Abitur". In the following open question they were given the opportunity to describe this benefit in more detail. Answers people gave were e.g. that language skills are always an advantage at that especially German companies operating in Finland appreciated the certificate. On top of that, it was considered easier to find work in Germany when having the "Abitur".

### 7.2.3 Recommendation of the school

All of the participating alumni stated that they would recommend the German School to others or had already done so.

With an open ended question, also the alumni had the opportunity to give reasons for their answers. The most frequent comment was that language skills were always an advantage and that students of the school were able to learn two languages fluently and get to know the Finnish as well as the German culture.

Even though answering the question with "yes" one participant commented that it takes also a lot of own initiative to be in touch with students of both cultures. During his/her time as a student he/she often felt, that students where, even though the school promoted to be a "place where two cultures meet", divided into Finns and Germans. For that reasons some of the Finnish students never really learned to speak German fluently.

*„Die Begegnung der finnisch- und deutschsprachigen Schülern wurde in meiner Schulzeit von Seiten der Schule trotz schönen Worten und guten Absichten überhaupt nicht geleistet, weswegen auch die Mehrzahl von denjenigen in der finnischsprachigen Klasse nie richtig Deutsch gelernt haben und viele in der deutschsprachigen Klasse nie Finnisch. Hierin ist noch heutzutage Vieles zu verbessern, wenn die Schule eine wirkliche Begegnungsschule sein will, und nicht bloß auf Papier und ihren Internetseiten.“*

### **7.2.4 Open question**

As well as in the parents' survey, the last question of the survey for the alumni was an open one and left space for comments, ideas etc.

Several participants stated that they had left the school with both certificates, the Finnish "Ylioppilastutkinto" as well as the German "Abitur".

Comments concerning the school were basically positive. One person suggested that it would be a good idea to let students choose between the Finnish and German school leaving certificate.

One of the participants was upset about the fact that in his/her opinion there were still two separated groups, the Finns and the Germans and instead of mutual communication and learning from and with each other the cultures are kind of opponents. According to him/her it is up to the school leaders to improve the situation.

## **8 Results of the teacher interviews**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of the teacher interviews conducted with six teachers in April and May 2012 in the school premises. The aim was to analyse their satisfaction with the German School as their place to work

### **8.1.1 Participants' backgrounds**

The teachers came from various backgrounds; half of them were Germans and half of them Finns. There were female and male teachers.

The interviewees had been working as teachers from six to over 20 years and had been teaching at the German School for one to nine years. All of the teachers from Germany had been teaching at German schools before and were for a limited time at the German School Helsinki. Some Finnish teachers said the German School Helsinki to be the first one they had ever been teaching in.

The participants were teaching a big variety of subjects as e.g. Mathematics, Finnish as a mother tongue, German, History, Geography and Physics. Teachers of classes one to twelve were represented.

### **8.1.2 Differences between the German School and previous schools**

When being asked about possible differences between the German School and other schools they had been teaching in, it became obvious that teachers from Germany considered schools in Germany fairly more achievement orientated. They said the German School Helsinki to be more social and taking more care of students needing support.

Teachers of Finnish nationality, on the other hand, expressed that the German School Helsinki is more achievement orientated than Finnish schools. One of the Finns e.g. stated that in his subject 8<sup>th</sup> graders of the German School study topics that are according to the Finnish curriculum taught in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

As a conclusion one can say that the German School Helsinki seems to be half way between Finnish and German schools.

### **8.1.3 The reputation of the school**

All participants said the reputation inside the school to be good and had the feeling that teachers were proud to be part of the institution. One teacher said, that especially teachers of Finnish origin appreciate the school and are eager to stay there.

*“Suomalaiset opettajat ei lähde täältä kuin eläkkeelle.”*

One German participant nevertheless noted that teachers coming from Germany and staying for only one or two years to not necessarily recognize reputation and values of their working place since they focus on organizing their life in the new country and getting familiar with its culture.

When reflecting about the reputation the school has outside every participant stated that he had heard only positive comments.

Among Germans that are interested in German Schools abroad the one in Helsinki has an excellent reputation which might according to some participants be related to Finland's success in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). One interviewee told that the German School had participated in this study in 2006 as a Finnish school and that its students' results were even better than the Finnish average.

Some participants said the school's reputation was influenced by its long tradition. Especially among Finns living in the Helsinki area the school is well-known and appreciated.

*“Melkein jokainen tuntee jonkun joka on käynyt tätä koulua.”*

#### **8.1.4 The aims and values of the school**

All interviewees said the most important goal of the school to be a place where representatives of two cultures meet and get to know each other. One teacher called the school “die Brücke”, a bridge between two cultures that have throughout history been related to each other.

As central values the school wants to communicate to its students, the participants mentioned open-mindedness, independence, appreciation of every individual, the cherishment of traditions, good behaviour and tolerance. All teachers emphasized that they can identify themselves with the values of the school.

#### **8.1.5 Work place climate**

Every participant stated the work place climate was really good and that all teachers were equal members of the community. They stated that everybody was motivated and willing to contribute to steady development and improvement. On top of that it was easy to get help from colleagues as well as from the school management if needed.

Nevertheless, the atmosphere changes constantly due to the fact that teachers from Germany usually only stay for a couple of years. This was considered an advantage and challenge at the same time. It is an opportunity to get to know new people, but on the other hand it constantly forces employees to adapt to changing colleagues.

When being asked whether they had the feeling that all teachers belonged to one community or whether there were two separated groups, one consisting of Finns and one of Germans, most participants stated that those groups existed to some extent. Nevertheless, none of them considered this a disadvantage. In their opinion it is normal that people at a work place community form groups, be it based on language, the subject they teach, common interests, etc. On top of that the belongingness to a certain group or community depends on the personality and initiative of each individual.

#### **8.1.6 Communication satisfaction**

The majority of the interviewees was generally satisfied with the communication at the German School and stated that they received important information on time.

In the past, new teachers often had difficulties with getting familiar with the customs of the school and the different media used, but nowadays a kind of “godparent hood” system has made the orientation easier. Nevertheless, some of the teachers still feel confused about the variety of channels used to communicate information and decisions. There are e.g. the Internet, the teachers’ post boxes, the bulletin board at the teachers’ room and the weekly newsletter.

The main language at teachers’ conferences is German, but the majority of issues and material is translated into Finnish as well. All teachers assured that there have never been communication problems due to the language. Conferences in general were considered important, useful and well organized.

The participants acknowledged that it was a huge challenge to hold conferences and discuss with about 70 people. One teacher stated that the new principal has improved the conference custom substantially. The most important point was that nowadays people really stick to time schedules and agendas. Even though time is always a limited

resource, all interviewees emphasized that everybody had the opportunity to express his ideas and that all opinions were taken into account when making decisions.

There were two teachers that were not fully satisfied with the conferences held at the school. One thought that regardless of several improvements they were in vain. The other person stated that discussions are too superficial and that people rather discuss among each other in small groups. This, according to this person was not due to the size of the conferences, but due to the differences between the German and the Finnish culture.

Despite the fact that conferences were considered well organized and information generally delivered well in time, some teachers stated that there are still situations when they are informed on too short term. This concerned especially one day trips of whole classes. One teacher told that it is really hard to plan and stick to the curriculum, when receiving information about the absence of a class just a few days in advance.

In the communication with parents an application called Wilma is used. All teachers considered this a good means to exchange information. For teachers that do not speak proper Finnish, the communication with parents who do not understand German is a challenge. In general, teachers considered the communication between them and the parents to be working well. They had the feeling that their work was appreciated and that the majority of parents was motivated and interested in the development of their children.

One participant wished that more emphasize would be put on open and honest communication in cases of problems. In his opinion parents and the student himself should be informed right away when the education at the German School turns out to be too demanding for the student.

### **8.1.7 Class size, available equipment, grade and recommendation**

In the opinion of all participants the class size at the German School was appropriate. Especially teachers from Germany considered it even “luxury” compared to schools in their home country. This makes it easy to take every student into account and support

those who have difficulties. On top of that it has positive influence on the work load when e.g. correcting assignments.

All interviewees appreciated the equipment available at the German School. They said that they were definitely able to design their lessons according to their wishes and that none of their plans had ever failed due to a lack of material. Everything has either been available or could easily be ordered.

The only exception were computers. The majority of the interviewed teaches wished that there would be more computer classes available also on short notice. At the moment, there is one laptop waggon that is either always booked or the computers are broken.

When being asked to grade the school as their place to work on a scale from one to ten where one was the worst and ten the best possible option, the participants graded the school with an average of 8,4.

All teachers would recommend the school to their colleagues and to parents. Nevertheless they stated that parents should take their children's' opinion into account. One teacher emphasized that also the way to school should be considered. At the moment some students come from e.g. Porvoo or Järvenpää which means hard and long days especially for younger students.

*“Terve järjenkäyttö on sallittua. Tämä koulu on hyvä, mutta onko se niin hyvä, että se on monen tunnin koulumatkan arvoinen?”*

### **8.1.8 Comments**

As well as parents and alumni, also the teachers were given the opportunity to comment and suggest improvements.

One participant was totally satisfied with the school and stated:

*“Miksi korjata jotain mikä ei ole rikki?”*

The most important improvement suggestion concerned the curricula of certain subjects. Even though the leaving certificate is the German “Abitur” the majority of students is of Finnish nationality and will most likely study at a university in Finland and should be well prepared for the entrance examinations there. This means that there should be a consistent dialogue between teachers from Finland and Germany in order to make needed adaptations to the German curriculum.



## 9 Summary of the findings

The aim of the research was to find answers to the following questions:

- What images do parents, teachers and alumni have of the school?
  - Are parents satisfied customers?
  - Are teachers satisfied with their workplace/working environment?
  - Does the German Abitur provide an “added value” in the eyes of parents and alumni?
- Based on those images, what can be said about the reputation of the German School?

One important factor influencing parents’ satisfaction with the school of their child is its functioning, i.e. the quality of teaching, how well teachers take the students’ skills are taken into account, how well school and parents cooperate and to what extent parents are able to influence decision-making at the school (Educational Studies 2007, 344.) In the case of the German School Helsinki parents can be considered satisfied customers since the majority of them agreed with the positive statements concerning the functioning of the school. On top of that, the vast majority of participants stated that they were satisfied with the school and would recommend it to other people.

All the interviewed teachers were satisfied with the German School as their place to work and stated this directly. They considered themselves equal members of a community and considered that they received enough appreciation and support from the school management as well as from other colleagues. All teachers are given the opportunity to influence school decision making and due to the good equipment they are able to design their lessons according to their wishes.

Since only eight of the participating alumni had left the school with the German “Abitur” as their only leaving certificate, the question whether it has provided advantages when looking for a job cannot be answered representatively. Nevertheless, the majority of participants stated that the German School had prepared them well for their studies

and working life. The major benefits stated by the participants were language skills that made it easy to find a job in German-speaking countries.

It became obvious that for the parents it was hard to evaluate whether their child would benefit from the German “Abitur”. This might be due to the fact that they did not have sufficient information concerning possible advantages of the “Abitur”, but also, because estimating the future is impossible.

Reputation is linked to employee satisfaction (Roper & Fill 2012, 42-43.) as well as good relations with the publics of the organisation (Aula & Mantere 2008, 30-31.) Based on this theory it can be summarized that the German School Helsinki has a good reputation.

## **10 Discussion**

During the process of this research I learned a lot about image and reputation and the importance of those factors for educational institutions. I applied theory concerning customer satisfaction at schools in general and recognized that regarding to some issues the German School Helsinki differs from “ordinary” schools.

Normally, convenience, i.e. the location of the school is a factor that has huge influence on parents’ choice of the school for their children (Kleititz and colleagues in Goldring & Philips 2008, 209). Since the German School Helsinki is the only official German School in Finland it can be considered an exception. For families from Germany who’s children do not speak Finnish and also for other parents that want their children to grow up with the German and Finnish culture and language it might be the only possible option. This might cause long ways to school and inconvenience especially for parents that take their children to school by car.

Educational institutions should try to retain qualified teachers in order to guarantee high quality teaching. Perrachione, Rosser & Petersen (2008, 1-2) state that employee satisfaction has large impact on teachers’ willingness to remain in one school. In the case of the German School Helsinki this can only be applied to those teachers that are

of Finnish nationality, since teachers from Germany are only allowed to stay for a limited amount of time.

Right from the start, the school management supported the implementation of my research. It was rewarding to see that especially parents eagerly participated in the survey and thought carefully about the feedback and development ideas they gave.

Since the research was conducted in April, also the parents of first graders had already observed the functioning of the school for almost one school year and were able to reflect upon their experiences. Since the questionnaires were available in Finnish and German, the vast majority of parents had the opportunity to answer it in their mother tongue.

Also teachers were interested in this research and offered their support also after the interviews. I was pleased to see that Finnish as well as German teachers participated. There were women and men and teachers of all grades and a variety of subjects they taught were represented. Thus, it can be assumed that the interviews give a representative picture of the teachers' opinions.

In order to get more alumni feedback especially on the influence and possible advantages of the "Abitur" on their future life, I could have tried to contact alumni that had graduated from the German School Helsinki between 2005 and 2010.

All in all, this bachelor's thesis gives a good impression of the reputation of the German School Helsinki and the designed questionnaires can also be used for future research.

## **11 Development ideas**

The survey among the parents showed that they were not really able or willing to answer the questions concerning the German "Abitur". Since the leaving certificate is one of the characteristics of the German School Helsinki, the school should make parents of students and also parents of potential students know about its advantages and

the fact that it gives the opportunity to study at Finnish and German Universities. On the one hand, this could be done with the help of the web pages, by adding a section that answers questions related to the German “Abitur”. On top of that, the school could cooperate with the alumni. They could visit “open-house” days as well as classes and parent-teacher conferences and tell about the experiences they have made after leaving the German School and entering into study- and working life. There could be even added a section of “success stories” to the schools’ web pages where former students reflect upon the advantages of the “Abitur” and the education at the German School in general.

I definitely agree with those parents who stated that the roads near the school are really dangerous especially for small children. After being informed about those comments the school management promised to think of ways to improve the situation. One idea would be to ask for more traffic signs in order to make car drivers aware of the fact that there are school children crossing the roads.

Due to the fact that teachers from Germany are only staying for a limited amount of time, the staff of the German School and with it the work place climate is constantly changing. Since the identity of an organization is created inside of it and has crucial influence on the images its stakeholders have of it, it is important that the identity of the school, its aims and values remain stable. New teachers need to be made familiar with the traditions and customs of the German School and that they should receive support if needed. This seems to work quite well already, but one thing that could be improved is to explain the use of different means of communication to new colleagues. This could be done by creating a kind of handbook that contains all means of communication and information channels and explains in which situations the means are used.

Constantly changing teachers are also a challenge for parents and students. I agree with the opinion of parents stating that teachers that will stay for only one year should not become form teachers of first graders.

The leaving certificate of the school is the German “Abitur”, but the majority of students is of Finnish origin and will presumably study at Finnish universities. Their en-

entrance examinations should be taken into account when planning lessons. This is of course only limitedly possible, since basically the German curriculum is applied. Also in this matter the school could cooperate with the alumni. One could ask former students that have participated in entrance examinations in Finland how well their education had prepared them for them.

The German School Helsinki should definitely use part of the results in its marketing and on its web pages. Especially the fact that the majority of the participating parents, teachers and alumni would recommend the school to others should be emphasized.

## **12 Further research**

Surveys among the parents should be conducted on a regular basis. This would give the opportunity to follow up on how well improvements based on parents' wishes are working. If there were enough resources, it could be an option to ask parents about their expectations in the beginning of the school year and conduct another survey at the end of the year to find out, whether these expectations could be met.

In order to gain a comprehensive picture of the opinions of the alumni, the school could establish an alumni feedback-system. One option would be to ask leaving students about their opinions concerning the quality of teaching and their satisfaction with the school. Even more useful would be to ask alumni that have left the school e.g. three or four years ago in order to find out whether their education at the German School has prepared them well for studies/working life and whether they already had any advantages due to the German "Abitur".

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# Attachments

## Attachment 1. The parents' survey in German



### Deutsche Schule Helsinki-Zufriedenheit der Eltern

**A** Zunächst möchte ich Sie bitten, einige allgemeine Fragen zu beantworten.

**1. Bitte geben Sie Ihre Nationalität an**

**2. Welchen Zweig der DSH besucht Ihr Kind?**

- den Deutschen Zweig  
 den Finnischen Zweig

**3. Bitte geben Sie an, welche Klasse Ihr Kind besucht**  
die Nummer der Klasse ist ausreichend

**B** Als nächstes bitte ich Sie, zwei Fragen bezüglich der Schulwahl für Ihr Kind zu beantworten. ( Fragen 4 und 5 )

**4. Wie stark haben die unten aufgeführten Faktoren die Schulwahl für Ihr Kind beeinflusst? (bitte bewerten Sie auf einer Skala von 5 bis 1)**

5 = hatte starken Einfluss 1 = hatte keinen Einfluss

	5 (hatte starken Einfluss)	4	3	2	1 (hatte keinen Einfluss)
Lage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Empfehlung von Freunden/Verwandten	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich habe die Schule selbst besucht	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Das Deutsche Abitur als Abschlusszeugnis	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die Vermittlung der deutschen Sprache und Kultur	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Das Angebot der Nachmittagsbetreuung von der ersten bis zur vierten Klasse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Etwas anderes, und zwar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Weiter -->

**5. Wie nützlich waren die unten aufgeführten Quellen bei der Informationsfindung über die DSH? (bitte bewerten Sie auf einer Skala von 5 bis 1)**

5 = war sehr nützlich 1 = war absolut nicht nützlich

	5 (war sehr nützlich)	4	3	2	1 (war absolut nicht nützlich)
Freunde/Verwandte	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
die Internetseite der DSH	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tag der offenen Tür	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
persönlicher Besuch	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
eine andere Quelle, <input type="text"/> und zwar	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**C. Im folgenden Teil möchte ich Sie bitten, die aufgestellten Behauptungen bezüglich der DSH zu beurteilen. Bitte schätzen Sie auf einer Skala von 4 bis 1 ein, inwieweit die Behauptungen Ihrer Meinung nach zutreffen. (Fragen 6 - 10)**

4 = trifft voll und ganz zu 3 = trifft eher zu 2 = trifft eher nicht zu 1 = trifft ganz und gar nicht zu 0 = kann ich nicht einschätzen

**6. Der Unterricht an der DSH**

	4 (trifft voll und ganz zu)	3 (trifft eher zu)	2 (trifft eher nicht zu)	1 (trifft ganz und gar nicht zu)	0 (kann ich nicht einschätzen)
Im Unterricht wird in ausreichendem Maße auf die Fähigkeiten meines Kindes eingegangen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Der Unterricht ist abwechslungsreich	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die Klassengröße ist angemessen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die Lehrer sind professionell	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die Lehrer sind freundlich und hilfsbereit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die Benotung erfolgt gerecht	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die Menge der Hausaufgaben ist angemessen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**7. Die Kommunikation zwischen Schule und Eltern**

	4 (trifft voll und ganz zu)	3 (trifft eher zu)	2 (trifft eher nicht zu)	1 (trifft ganz und gar nicht zu)	0 (kann ich nicht einschätzen)
Die Elternabende an der DSH sind nützlich und versorgen mich mit wichtigen Informationen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich werde ausreichend über die Fortschritte meines Kindes informiert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich werde rechtzeitig über eventuelle Probleme meines Kindes informiert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bei Bedarf ist es leicht Kontakt mit den Lehrern aufzunehmen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ich habe die Möglichkeit die Entscheidungsfindung der Schule zu beeinflussen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**8. Das Abitur der DSH**

	4 (trifft voll und ganz zu)	3 (trifft eher zu)	2 (trifft eher nicht zu)	1 (trifft ganz und gar nicht zu)	0 (kann ich nicht einschätzen)
Das Deutsche Abitur bereitet mein Kind gut auf ein mögliches Studium vor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Das Deutsche Abitur bereitet mein Kind gut auf das Berufsleben vor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Das Deutsche Abitur wird meinem Kind Vorteile bei der Arbeitsplatzsuche verschaffen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Weiter -->

**9. Die Internetseite der DSH**

	4 (trifft voll und ganz zu)	3 (trifft eher zu)	2 (trifft eher nicht zu)	1 (trifft ganz und gar nicht zu)	0 (kann ich nicht einschätzen)
Die Internetseiten der DSH sind einfach zu bedienen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die Internetseiten enthalten alle wichtigen Informationen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die deutsche und die finnische Version der Seite sind von gleich guter Qualität	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**10. Allgemeine Zufriedenheit mit der DSH**

	4 (trifft voll und ganz zu)	3 (trifft eher zu)	2 (trifft eher nicht zu)	1 (trifft ganz und gar nicht zu)	0 (kann ich nicht einschätzen)
Im Großen und Ganzen bin ich sehr zufrieden mit der DSH	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**11. Würden Sie die DSH anderen Eltern empfehlen/haben Sie dies bereits getan?**

Bitte kreuzen Sie eine der beiden Antworten an. Das Anfügen einer Erklärung ist nicht zwingend.

- Ja, weil
- Nein, weil

**12. Hier können Sie Ihre Kommentare, Ideen, Lob und Verbesserungsvorschläge loswerden.**

**Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme!**

Ich möchte meine Antworten absenden

## Attachment 2. The parents' survey in Finnish



### Helsingin Saksalainen Koulu - vanhempien tyytyväisyys

**A Ensiksi pyydän sinua vastaamaan muutamiin taustakysymyksiin.**

**1. Mikä on kansallisuutesi?**

**2. Kummalla linjalla lapsesi opiskelee?**

- Saksankielisellä linjalla  
 Suomenkielisellä linjalla

**3. Millä luokalla lapsesi on?**

Pelkkä numero riittää vastaukseksi

**B Seuraavaksi pyydän sinua vastaamaan kahteen koulun valintaan liittyvään kysymykseen. (kysymykset 4 ja 5)**

**4. Minkä verran ovat alla olevat tekijät vaikuttaneet lapsesi koulun valintaan? (Arvioi asteikolla 5 - 1)**

5 = oli suuri merkitys 1 = ei ollut lainkaan merkitystä

	5 (oli suuri merkitys)	4	3	2	1 (ei ollut lainkaan merkitystä)
Sijainti	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Suositus sukulaiselta/ystävältä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Olen itse käynyt samaa koulua	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saksan "Abitur" päättötutkinto	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saksan kielen ja kulttuurin opettaminen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Iltapäivätoiminta luokkien 1 - 4 oppilaille	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Joku muu. <input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mikä?					

**5. Kuinka paljon alla olevat lähteet ovat auttaneet sinua löytämään tietoa Helsingin Saksalaisesta Koulusta? (Arvioi asteikolla 5 - 1)**

5 = on auttanut paljon 1 = ei ole auttanut lainkaan

	5 (on auttanut paljon)	4	3	2	1 (ei ole auttanut lainkaan)
Sukulaiset/Ystävät	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Koulun nettisivut	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Avoimien ovien päivät	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Henkilökohtainen vierailu	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Joku muu. Mikä? <input type="text"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[Seuraava -->](#)

**C Seuraavassa osassa on lueteltu Helsingin Saksalaista Koulua koskevia väittämiä. Arvioi asteikolla 4 - 1, kuinka hyvin väittämät pitävät mielestäsi paikkaansa. ( kysymykset 6 - 10 )**

4 = täysin samaa mieltä 3 = jokseenkin samaa mieltä 2= jokseenkin eri mieltä 1 = täysin eri mieltä 0 = en osaa sanoa

**6. Opetus Helsingin Saksalaisessa Koulussa**

	4 (täysin samaa mieltä)	3 (jokseenkin samaa mieltä)	2 (jokseenkin eri mieltä)	1 (täysin eri mieltä)	0 (en osaa sanoa)
Opetuksessa otetaan lapseni taitoja riittävästi huomioon	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opetus on monipuolinen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Luokan koko on sopiva	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opettajat ovat ammattitaitoisia	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opettajat ovat ystävällisiä ja avuliaita	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arvosanat annetaan oikeudenmukaisesti	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Läksyjen määrä on kohtuullinen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**7. Koulun ja vanhempien välinen tiedonvälitys**

	4 (täysin samaa mieltä)	3 (jokseenkin samaa mieltä)	2 (jokseenkin eri mieltä)	1 (täysin eri mieltä)	0 (en osaa sanoa)
Vanhempainillat ovat hyödyllisiä ja antavat tärkeää tietoa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saan riittävästi lapseni kehitystä koskevaa tietoa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saan tietoa lapseni mahdollisista ongelmista hyvissä ajoin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opettajiin saa tarvittaessa helposti yhteyttä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minulla on mahdollisuus vaikuttaa koulun päätöksentekoon	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**8. Koulun päättötutkinto, saksalainen "Abitur"**

	4 (täysin samaa mieltä)	3 (jokseenkin samaa mieltä)	2 (jokseenkin eri mieltä)	1 (täysin eri mieltä)	0 (en osaa sanoa)
Saksalainen "Abitur" antaa lapselleni hyvät valmiudet opiskeluihin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saksalainen "Abitur" antaa lapselleni hyvät valmiudet työelämään	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lapsellani tulee työnhaussa olemaan hyötyä "Abitur"-todistuksesta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**9. Koulun Internet sivut**

	4 (täysin samaa mieltä)	3 (jokseenkin samaa mieltä)	2 (jokseenkin eri mieltä)	1 (täysin eri mieltä)	0 (en osaa sanoa)
Koulun Internet sivuja on helppo käyttää	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sivut sisältävät kaikki tärkeät tiedot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sivujen saksankielinen ja suomenkielinen versio ovat yhtä laadukkaita	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**10. Yleinen tyytyväisyys Helsingin Saksalaiseen Kouluun**

	4 (täysin samaa mieltä)	3 (jokseenkin samaa mieltä)	2 (jokseenkin eri mieltä)	1 (täysin eri mieltä)	0 (en osaa sanoa)
Kaiken kaikkiaan olen erittäin tyytyväinen koulun toimintaan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Seuraava -->

**11. Suositteisitko Helsingin Saksalaista Koulua muille vanhemmille/oletko jo tehnyt niin?**

Ole hyvä ja valitse jompikumpi vaihtoehto, selityksen antaminen ei ole välttämätön

- Kyllä, koska
- En, koska

**12. Tässä on tilaa kommenteille, ideoille, kehuille ja parannusehdotuksille**

**Kiitos vastauksistasi!**

Vahvista vastausten lähetyk

### Attachment 3. The parents' invitation to the survey in German

Liebe Eltern,

im Rahmen einer Analyse des Rufs der DSH führen wir in der Zeit vom 11.04. bis 27.04.2012 eine Online-Befragung zur Zufriedenheit der Eltern mit der Schule durch.

Die Beantwortung der Fragen wird ca. 5 Minuten in Anspruch nehmen. Mit Ihrer Teilnahme können Sie wertvolle Informationen zur Qualität der Bildung an der DSH geben.

Wenn Sie an der Befragung teilnehmen möchten, klicken Sie bitte einen der folgenden Links an (bzw. kopieren Sie ihn in Ihren Browser) und füllen Sie den Fragebogen bis spätestens **27.04.2012** aus.

Der Fragebogen auf Deutsch:

<https://www.webpolsurveys.com/S/D7B569B8B4B96E92.par>

Und auf Finnisch:

<https://www.webpolsurveys.com/S/458941D8FF67B89F.par>

Die Auswertung erfolgt streng vertraulich und anonym. Einzelne Antworten können keinem Teilnehmer persönlich zugeordnet werden.

Die Studie ist Teil der Bachelor-Arbeit der HAAGA-HELIA –Studentin Anja Zerbinati. Thema der Arbeit ist der Ruf der DSH aus Sicht von Eltern, Lehrern und Alumni.

Sollten Sie Fragen bezüglich der Elternbefragung oder der Arbeit an sich haben, können Sie sich gern mit Anja in Verbindung setzen.

Email: [anja\\_zerbinati@gmx.de](mailto:anja_zerbinati@gmx.de)

Telefon: +358 44 944 0100

Vielen Dank für Ihre Unterstützung!

## Attachment 4 The parents' invitation to the survey in Finnish

Hyvät vanhemmat,

Helsingin Saksalaisen Koulun maineen tutkimuksen yhteydessä suoritamme ajalla 10.04. – 27.04.2012 vanhempien tyytyväisyyskyselyn verkossa.

Verkkolomakkeen täyttäminen kestää noin viisi minuuttia. Osallistumalla voit antaa arvokasta palautetta Helsingin Saksalaisen Koulun opetuksen laadusta.

Mikäli olet halukas osallistumaan tutkimukseen, klikkaa jompaakumpaa alla olevaa linkkiä (tai kopioi sitä selaimesi) ja täytä lomake viimeistään **27.04.2012**.

Kysely saksan kielellä:

<https://www.webropolsurveys.com/S/D7B569B8B4B96E92.par>

Kysely suomen kielellä

<https://www.webropolsurveys.com/S/458941D8FF67B89F.par>

Kyselyn analysointi tapahtuu ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti. Vastauksia ei voida yhdistää osallistujiin.

Tutkimus on osaa Haaga-Helia -opiskelija Anja Zerbinatin opinnäytetyötä. Työn aiheena on Helsingin Saksalaisen Koulun maine vanhempien, opettajien ja alumnien näkökulmasta.

Anja antaa tarvittaessa mielellään lisätietoa kyselystä ja mainetutkimuksesta kokonaisuudessaan.

Sähköposti: [anja\\_zerbinati@gmx.de](mailto:anja_zerbinati@gmx.de)

Puhelin: +358 44 944 0100

Kiitos osallistumisestasi!



## Attachment 5. The alumni survey in German



### Deutsche Schule Helsinki - Alumni

**A Zunächst möchte ich Sie bitten, ein paar allgemeine Fragen zu beantworten.**

**1. Wo wohnen Sie derzeit?**

- in Finnland
- in Deutschland
- in einem anderen Land, und zwar

**2. Bitte geben Sie an, in welchem Zeitraum Sie die DSH besucht haben.**

Die Jahreszahlen sind ausreichend

**3. Bitte kreuzen Sie an, in welchem Zweig Sie unterrichtet wurden**

- im Deutschen Zweig
- im Finnischen Zweig
- es gab noch keine Zweige

**4. Mit welchem Abschluss haben Sie die DSH verlassen?**

- mit dem deutschen Abitur
- mit dem finnischen Abitur
- mit keinem von beiden

**B Nun möchte ich Sie bitten die unten aufgeführten Behauptungen bezüglich Ihrer Zeit an der DSH zu beurteilen. Bitte schätzen Sie auf einer Skala von 4 bis 1 ein, inwieweit die Behauptungen Ihrer Meinung nach zutreffen.**

4 = trifft voll und ganz zu 3 = trifft eher zu 2 = trifft eher nicht zu 1 = trifft ganz und gar nicht zu 0 = kann ich nicht einschätzen

**5. Die Deutsche Schule Helsinki**

	4 (trifft voll und ganz zu)	3 (trifft eher zu)	2 (trifft eher nicht zu)	1 (trifft ganz und gar nicht zu)	0 (kann ich nicht einschätzen)
Ich habe meine Schulzeit an der DSH genossen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die DSH hat mich gut auf mein Studium vorbereitet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Die DSH hat mich gut auf das Berufsleben vorbereitet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Durch das Deutsche Abitur habe ich Vorteile bei der Arbeitsplatzsuche gehabt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Im Nachhinein betrachtet würde ich mich wieder für die DSH entscheiden	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**6. Falls Sie durch das Deutsche Abitur Vorteile bei der Arbeitsplatzfindung gehabt haben, könnten Sie diese bitte näher beschreiben?**

**7. Würden Sie die DSH weiterempfehlen/haben Sie dies bereits getan?**

Bitte kreuzen Sie eine der beiden Antworten an. Die Angabe von Gründen ist nicht zwingend.

- Ja, weil
- Nein, weil

**8. Hier können Sie Ihre Kommentare, Ideen, Lob und Verbesserungsvorschläge loswerden.**

**Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme!**

Ich möchte meine Antworten absenden

## Attachment 6. The alumni survey in Finnish



### Helsingin Saksalainen Koulu - Alumnit

#### A Aluksi pyydän sinua vastaamaan muutamiin taustakysymyksiin

##### 1. Missä maassa asut tällä hetkellä?

- Suomessa  
 Saksassa  
 Jossain muussa maassa. Missä?

##### 2. Milloin opiskelit Helsingin Saksalaisessa Koulussa?

Vuosiluvut riittävät

##### 3. Kummalla linjalla opiskelit?

- Saksankielisellä linjalla  
 Suomenkielisellä linjalla  
 Linjoja ei vielä ollut

##### 4. Millä tutkinnolla aikasi Helsingin Saksalaisen Koulun oppilaana päättyi?

- Suomen ylioppilastutkinnolla  
 Saksan Abitur -tutkinnolla  
 ei kummallakaan

#### B Seuraavassa osassa on lueteltu Helsingin Saksalaista Koulua koskevia väittämiä. Ole hyvä ja arvioi asteikolla 4 - 1, kuinka hyvin väittämät pitävät mielestäsi paikkaansa.

4 = täysin samaa mieltä 3 = jokseenkin samaa mieltä 2 = jokseenkin eri mieltä 1 = täysin eri mieltä 0 = en osaa sanoa

##### 5. Helsingin Saksalainen Koulu

	4 (täysin samaa mieltä)	3 (jokseenkin samaa mieltä)	2 (jokseenkin eri mieltä)	1 (täysin eri mieltä)	0 (en osaa sanoa)
Nautin ajastani Helsingin Saksalaisen Koulun oppilaana	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helsingin Saksalainen Koulu antoi minulle hyvät valmiudet opiskeluihin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helsingin Saksalainen Koulu antoi minulle hyvät valmiudet työelämään	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jälkeenpäin katsottuna valitsisin Helsingin Saksalaisen Koulun uudelleen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Saksalaisen "Abiturin" ansiosta minulla on ollut etuja työnhaussa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Seuraava -->

**6. Mikäli sinulla on ollut Saksalaisen Abiturin ansiosta etuja työnhaussa, voisitko kuvailla niitä?**



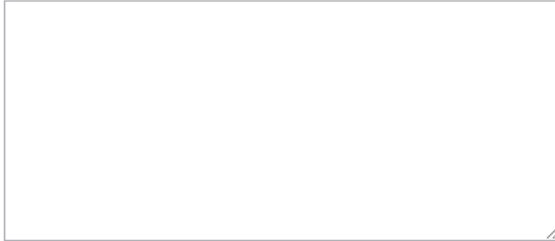
**7. Suositteisitko Helsingin Saksalaista Koulua muille/oletko jo tehnyt sitä?**

Ole hyvä ja valitse jompikumpi vastaus. Selityksien antaminen ei ole pakollista.

Kyllä,  
koska

En,  
koska

**8. Tässä on tilaa kommenteille, ideoille, kehuille ja parannusehdotuksille.**



**Kiitos vastauksistasi!**

Vahvista vastausten lähetykset

## Attachment 7. The alumni invitation to the survey in German

Liebe Alumni,

im Rahmen einer Analyse des Rufs der DSH führen wir in der Zeit vom 08.05. bis 22.05.2012 eine Online-Befragung der Alumni durch.

Das Ausfüllen des Fragebogens wird nur wenige Minuten in Anspruch nehmen. Mit Ihrer Teilnahme können Sie wertvolle Informationen zur Qualität der Ausbildung an der DSH geben.

Die Auswertung der Fragebögen erfolgt streng vertraulich und anonym. Einzelne Antworten können keinem Teilnehmer persönlich zugeordnet werden.

Sollten Sie bereit sein an der Umfrage teilzunehmen, klicken Sie bitte auf einen der folgenden Links (bzw. kopieren Sie ihn in Ihren Browser) ...

die Umfrage in deutscher Sprache:

<https://www.webpolsurveys.com/S/2C973A7F25C853CC.par>

die Umfrage in finnischer Sprache:

<https://www.webpolsurveys.com/S/6B653140CD6C8F0F.par>

...und füllen Sie den Fragebogen bis spätestens **22.05.2012** aus.

Die Umfrage wird Teil der Bachelor-Arbeit der Haaga-Helia Studentin Anja Zerbinati sein. Thema der Arbeit ist die Analyse der Rufs der DSH aus Sicht von Alumni, Eltern und Lehrern. Sollten Sie Fragen zur Umfrage oder der Studie im Allgemeinen haben, können Sie sich gern mit Anja in Verbindung setzen.

Email: [anja\\_zerbinati@gmx.de](mailto:anja_zerbinati@gmx.de)

Telefon: +358 44 944 0100

Vielen Dank für Ihre Unterstützung!

## Attachment 8. The alumni invitation to the survey in Finnish

Hyvät alumnit,

Helsingin Saksalaisen Koulun maineen tutkimuksen yhteydessä suorittamme ajalla 08.05.2012 – 22.05.2012 alumni mielipidekyselyn verkossa.

Lomakkeen täyttämiseen menee vain muutama minuutti. Osallistumalla voit antaa arvokasta tietoa Helsingin Saksalaisen Koulun koulutuksen laadusta.

Kyselyiden analysointi tapahtuu ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti. Vastaukset ei voida yhdistää osallistujiin.

Mikäli olet halukas osallistumaan tutkimukseen, klikkaa jompaakumpaa alla olevaa linkkiä (tai kopioi sitä selaimeesi)...

kysely saksan kielellä:

<https://www.webropolsurveys.com/S/2C973A7F25C853CC.par>

kysely suomen kielellä

<https://www.webropolsurveys.com/S/6B653140CD6C8F0F.par>

... ja täytä lomake **22.05.2012** mennessä.

Tämä tutkimus on osaa Haaga-Helia opiskelija Anja Zerbinatin opinnäytetyötä. Työn aiheena on Helsingin Saksalaisen Koulun maine alumnien, vanhempien ja opettajien näkökulmasta. Anja vastaa mielellään kyselyyn tai mainetutkimukseen liittyviin kysymyksiin.

Sähköposti: [anja\\_zerbinati@gmx.de](mailto:anja_zerbinati@gmx.de)

Puhelin: +358 44 944 0100

Kiitos osallistumisestasi