

## Germany-Thuringia

**"Stiftung Deutsche Landerziehungsheime****Hermann-Lietz Schule Haubinda"**

*A private full-day boarding school based on reform pedagogic principles by H. Lietz (in tradition of Landerziehungsheime), comprising primary school, secondary school, and technical college for students aged 6 – 20. The school follows official curricula, but in addition emphasizes practical, manual work and cooperative, social skills. Whereas the focus of primary school is on the acquisition of learning methods like individual project work and cooperative learning in mixed-age groups, the higher grades are more subject-oriented. Work forms include participation in scientific competitions, cooperation with local communities, and theatre performances. Communication among teachers is organized (e.g., in teacher groups) in order to encourage interdisciplinary cooperation and unified curricula. A school parliament including students decides on daily school life, and a school board including parents oversees school functioning.*

**Main Focus of Innovation:** ORGANISATION, TEACHERS

**Other keywords:** alternative philosophy

**General Information**

**Name of the ILE:** Stiftung Deutsche Landerziehungsheime Hermann-Lietz Schule Haubinda

**Location/Address:** Stiftung 01, 98663 Haubinda, Thuringia, Germany

**Website:** [www.lietz-schulen.de](http://www.lietz-schulen.de)

**ILE submitted by:** Thuringian Ministry of Culture and Education

**Rationale**

*Why do you suggest that it should be included in the project? How does it respond to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning challenges?*

Hermann-Lietz Schule Haubinda seeks to create a school environment in which students with very different levels of talent and of very different social and geographic backgrounds come together to form a cooperative community of learners. The goals of this community are, on the one hand, to help each student to graduate with the highest possible diploma suited to his or her capabilities, and, on the other hand, to educate children and adolescents in practical manual skills and to foster in them a sense of shared social responsibility and a high standard of tolerance and democratic thought.

The underlying principle is not that the school prepares students for their future life, but rather renders that real life both learnable and liveable within the context of their daily school experience.

The school's structure and unique geographic location play an essential role in achieving these aims, as does the sense of ownership and responsibility created in students through the multiple opportunities for cooperative participation offered to them.

**Evidence**

*Is there any evidence or indications showing that this initiative achieves the outcomes that it is aiming at?*

Over ninety percent of students successfully attain their sought-after diploma.

Approximately fifty percent of students graduating with a mid-level secondary school diploma (awarded on completion of class ten examinations) go on to pursue further studies. The demand for places for new students is very high; the school receives throughout the year huge numbers of inquiries from interested parents throughout Germany. The local community, county, and regional Department of Education continually point to Hermann-Lietz Schule Haubinda as a successful example of an innovative school.

**Learning Aims / Intended Learning Outcomes of the ILE**

*What are the core learning aims and which knowledge, skills or attitudes are to be acquired? (These may include outcomes related to learners' social, interpersonal, or meta-cognitive development)*

In both the content and aim of student learning, the school follows the obligatory Thüringen curriculum (according to the European competency model). Moreover, the basic goals of the school are laid out in the school constitution. Every student pledges, in the form of a signed contract, to accept and abide by the rules and goals set forth in this document.

Further details of question four (Learning Aims/ Intended Learning Outcomes of the ILE):

Since the Hermann Lietz Schule – Haubinda was privatized in 2001, the “school leavers” (or students who have graduated) from the secondary school, having completed year nine or ten, have had a 95- 100 percent success rate. The number of students who had to repeat their previous class has decreased to a minimum.

The main reasons for a student repeating a year is based on the parent's wishes or a long lasting illness.

Poor cognitive achievements are made known to parents in the form of report cards, provided twice per semester, or four times a year. Teachers at the school administer these marks in digital form. The student's achievements in relation to the following: social, sport, creative, craftsman or cultural awareness skills are discussed with the students and their parents twice per year at individual parent/ teacher conferences. In preparation for this event, the students get at least two written reports from their class teacher and, if the student boards at the school, another report from their house tutor. The student may also use these course reports to apply for internships, vocational training or to pursue further studies. Regular school festivals, and other school events, also give the parents a chance to see how the different fields of education work at our school and their individual benefits to our students in the future.

The Hermann Lietz Schule must remain competitive with neighbouring Thüringen schools, as well as, other boarding schools throughout Germany, as we are a private school and parents and students have the choice of where they attend school in order to get the best education.

### **Learners**

*Which group(s) of learners is it aiming at? Who is eligible to take part? How many learners are there? What are their ages?*

The student body is composed of 410 students between the ages of six and twenty. 80 students attend the primary school; 270 attend the secondary school; and 60 students attend 5 the technical college. Any student who accepts and respects the school's philosophy and aims is eligible to study here.

### **Facilitators**

*Who are the teachers/facilitators? Who are the leaders? What are their professional backgrounds? What are their roles?*

A total of seventy-eight adults are involved in the educational process of Hermann-Lietz Schule Haubinda. Forty-five of these employees are professional teachers with a university degree in their subjects. Moreover, the school employs school assistants, who hold varying pedagogic degrees and support the teaching staff and students in myriad ways, and social workers, who organize and enhance student learning outside of lessons. The school's technical staff consists of caretakers, painters, carpenters, farmers, cleaning staff, and cooks, and its administrative staff includes two secretaries. The school also employs two to three foreign language assistants each year. Every member of the teaching and technical staff is involved daily in academic lessons, extracurricular clubs, and practical work with the students. In addition to its on-site staff, the school works in cooperation with outside institutions that provide analysis of and feedback on the school's operation.

### **Organization of the ILE**

*How is learning organised? How do learners and facilitators interact? What kind of pedagogy do they follow? What curriculum is used?*

The school operates on a full day schedule from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The school is organized on the nineteenth century pedagogic reform principles of its founder, Dr. Hermann Lietz, who opened the first German boarding schools (Landerziehungsheime), of which there are now twenty-one. As previously mentioned, the school follows the Thüringen curriculum, but it seeks to enrich its academic curriculum with an emphasis on practical, manual work and cooperative, social skills. Groups of teachers form teams, divided by age level in the lower grades (Team 1 to 4 and Team 5 to 6), and by topics of interest in the middle grades (Team 7a to 10a- Natural Sciences, Team 7b to 10b- Economics, Environment, and Europe, and Team 7c to 10c- Drama). Regular team meetings take place throughout the academic year to unify the team's curriculum and to encourage interdisciplinary projects and learning. The school board, which includes both teacher and parent representatives, helps to oversee the functioning of the school, while the school Parliament, composed of the elected school Chancellor and student and teacher representatives and controlled by the Constitutional Court, made up of two students and two teachers, helps to determine the course of daily school life and rules. The entire teaching staff meets at least once a month. The school's administration consists of the leaders of each of the aforementioned teams and the school head.

Further details of question number seven (Organization of Learning in the ILE):

Organization of learning, at the Hermann Lietz Schule, begins in the primary school where students attend classes to be trained in a variety of learning methods. Some examples include: group work, “free and easy” work periods (where a list of activities are planned for the student and although they may complete them in any order and pace, must be completed and handed in at the end of one weeks time), project activities and small groups of mixed ages working together to complete a project.

The students, from the start of their schooling, learn with and from each of their classmates, as this has always been a main ideal of their primary school training. The architecture itself of the primary school, built in 2001, has been designed according to these differing organizations of learning.

In classes five and six; the bridge between primary school and subject orientated learning of the upper classes, both primary school and secondary school teachers work together on a singular team to build lesson plans and assignments for students. In these classes, the learning methods are again built upon students being able to work independently, as well as together on a team. Musical rehearsals and participation in competitive clubs (of both mental and physical capacity) are a few examples which aid students in attaining their individual goals. Goals such as, in the 2008- 09 academic school year, our Hermann Lietz Schule took first place in the history competition, where they competed with schools throughout Thuringen.

Beginning in year seven, students learning is switched to orientation according to specific subjects.

Correlating topical projects, based on ones emphasis, are easier to manage as the classes are divided into three optional choices of subjects which include: Drama; Economics, Environment and Europe and Natural Sciences. Projects for the Drama Team include rehearsing theater performances at the weekly “Kapelle” presentation, or cultural event held after dinner. The Economics, Environment and Europe Team takes part in “Agenda 21,” which is environmental projects which bridge school and local communities in regards to their shared environment. Finally, the Natural Sciences Team projects include: scientific experimentation and research on the water quality of ponds on the school’s campus, participation in a scientific competition called “Science Prize,” awarded by the schools foundation, and participation in the “Mathematical Olympics” in Thüringen; where last year one of our students also took first place in the entire competition of Thüringen.

In the technical college, the teaching methods focus on skills necessary for study at the university level. These classes include: lectures, seminars, presentations, discussions and interviews.

In the present school year, 2009- 10, our Hermann Lietz Schule has established a thirteenth class, Allgemeines Abitur, of our most talented students whom will finish with the general Abitur qualification.

The students learn and are trained in business situations. One project these students must complete is to create their own company, teach themselves and learn through experimentation, in a virtual computer program world, the skills, setbacks, risk, difficulties and benefits of starting their own business.

Note: Please see the school calendar and school magazine.

### **Learning Context**

*In which context does learning take place? What does the physical learning environment look like? Are community resources used to facilitate learning and how?*

The entire school grounds include eighty hectares of forests and fields, and the school’s many various-functioning buildings are scattered across its large campus. (See Supplementary Information for the school map). In accordance with Agenda 21, the school works together with the local community; the school, local villages, and area firms organize and prepare various events such as the school festival, Christmas market, and environmentally-themed Comenius project.

**History of ILE**

*Who initiated it? For what reasons was it started and with what purpose? Have these changed since?*

Dr. Hermann Lietz founded the school in Haubinda in 1901 as a response to the Prussian drill school model. According to Lietz's new conception of education, the basis for student success was learning by doing. After a tumultuous history during the era of the former German Democratic Republic, these founding ideas, complemented by the new possibilities of the late twentieth century, were reanimated.

At its founding, Haubinda consisted only of a boarding school; today, two-thirds of its students are day students commuting from the local area. The school also seeks to help those students for whom the accelerated pace of the learning process poses difficulties. Furthermore, the school offers students an educational environment that places pure cognitive learning on equal footing with practical work and social experience.

**Funding of the ILE**

*How is it funded?*

The school's main source of funding is the state of Thüringen, according to the law governing the financing of private schools. Additional funding is received from parents in the form of tuition, equaling 200 Euros per month for each day student. European projects such as KULAP and LEADER PLUS, supported by the European Union, also provide financial support.

Special events at the school are realized with the help of donations from an organization of alumni, parents, and friends of the school.

**Learning Outcomes**

*What are the learning outcomes achieved by the ILE, including academic, social, interpersonal and meta-cognitive outcomes? How is learning assessed?*

Student's academic learning is evaluated through grades and school reports, given out twice each academic year. In addition to the written school report, students and parents receive a verbal evaluation of the student's development.

Students can graduate from Hermann-Lietz Schule Haubinda with three different diplomas: Hauptschule (ninth grade), Realschule (tenth grade), and Fachhochschulereife (twelfth grade). With their school reports, students can receive certificates in recognition of social engagement and various achievements.

Every student must also prove himself or herself capable in the field of practical work.

**Documentation describing or evaluating the ILE**

*Is there documentation on this learning environment? Is there a website? Films? Research reports or evaluations? Other forms of documentation? (please supply references or links)*

Information about the school can be found on its website ([www.lietzschulen.de](http://www.lietzschulen.de)). The firm Steg, in the name of the Federal Republic of Germany, regularly conducts surveys among staff and parents in order to give the school and its employee's feedback concerning satisfaction with the school's performance and new ideas for innovative teaching methods.

The school publication Glaskasten is published twice a year and presents life at the school in the form of a printed magazine. The bi-yearly publication Leben und Arbeit is sent to alumni and other friends of the Hermann-Lietz Schule worldwide. Students work closely with the University of Bamberg, where a seminar entitled "Lernort Haubinda" is offered each semester. University students in this course use their theoretical knowledge to help organize students' free-time activities in Haubinda and write semester papers about the school and its Lietz pedagogy. Regional and national newspapers and magazines regularly report on the school as an outstanding educational model (see Stern, 1/2009). The Lietz Foundation awards yearly to students at the Friedrich Schiller Universität Jena the Lietz Prize in recognition of work and research informed by the reform pedagogy of Dr. Hermann Lietz.

Professor, Dr. R. Coerrenz, Chair of the University's School of Education, leads the Lietz Academy, which trains the teaching staff of the Hermann-Lietz Schule. The school is member of the Association of German Boarding Schools (Deutsche Landerziehungsheime, DLEH), which regularly publishes information concerning the activities of its members. The Thüringen Department of Education in Erfurt collects current documentation of the school's involvement in European school partnerships (Comenius project).