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PRESS RELEASE

Children, Teachers and Parents fight to keep IFK/CIS

Together we want to ensure the long-term future of the International School in Cologne

In a Press release on February 14th 2017, the Amand Company announced that they would withdraw their financial support and business interest in the International Friedensschule Köln (IFK) at the end of the 2017/2018 Academic Year. The City of Cologne has expressed an interest in renting the building from 2018 for a state Gymnasium. Over 600 students, representing 45 nationalities, their parents along with over 100 IFK/CIS teachers and other school staff have joined together to campaign for the survival of the school which, thanks to it's unique concept is essential for many families but also for Cologne Businesses. It now looks like their engagement maybe paying off.

The Amand Group's decision to withdraw their support to the IFK in summer 2018 does not mean that the school will close. In the past few days discussions have begun with the Amand group and representatives from school committees (the parent run Economic Committee, a Save the School Committee, the PTA Steering Committee and the Parent Representatives from the DIF Board) with support from the teaching staff and a wider group of parents, to discuss future ways forward for the school. A number of investors have already expressed interest in offering funding to the school to ensure its long-term future.

The School Management and Teachers have expressed with overwhelming support their intention to actively work towards the future of the school. While it is clear that there will be a need to make adjustments, all of these efforts and initiatives are aligned to a common goal; the continuation and improvement of the three schools in a successful joint IKF/CIS with sustained growth. Negotiations are due to be completed by the end of the month so that an investor consortium that can ensure the long-term financial security of the school will be chosen.

There are many convincing arguments why IFK/CIS needs to be maintained and its future secured in the Cologne area. The education on offer in a city influences the decision of parents and families, whether to accept or decline a job offer. To compete in the international job market a region cannot afford to underestimate this factor. Skilled professionals from all over the world contribute significantly to economic growth. Investment decisions by international companies and bodies are influenced by the availability skilled employees. For the continued economic success of Cologne it is clearly essential to offer those international employees suitable schools where their children can be educated with internationally portable curriculum. Thus an international school that follows a global curriculum and allows children to change schools throughout the world without problems is huge advantage. The IFK/CIS and bilingual Gymnasium is the only school in the region to offer a programme from primary years (PYP) to the world recognised International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB). If the IFK/CIS continues, in future international companies employees and families will be able to rely on appropriate

education for their children. One likely consequence is that the City of Cologne, like other large cities in NRW and Germany will have a better international infrastructure and will facilitate economic growth.

There are three separate schools within the IFK Campus; a bilingual primary school which follows the PYP, a bilingual German-English Gymnasium which offers a wide range of languages and the CIS which offers the IGCSE and the IB as School Leaving Qualifications. The school is characterised by integration and cooperation between the three schools. The Primary and the Bilingual Gymnasium are certified "Ersatz Schulen" and with their more than 600 students, and alleviate demands on local state schools.

The primary school is also certified as an IB World School. Lessons are conducted following the guidelines of the globally applied PYP curriculum (Primary Years Programme). In addition the learning requirements set out by the state of Nordrhein-Westfalen are also integrated into the Curriculum. This offers families who need to move the possibility, to change schools in other countries or in the German state system, without disrupting their childrens' education.

The huge advantage of the PYP lies in the interdisciplinary learning based on modern educational concepts and project work. All subjects are conducted in relation to specific theme. In this way the programme brings the lessons to life. This teaches understanding of social, economic, political and technical concepts and also structural thinking. Additionally, the programme enables the children to recognise and develop their strengths.

Besides bilingual English lessons, the Gymnasium offers intensive contact with the English language through joint lessons with the students of the International school. Spanish is offered as the second foreign language in the primary and is continued from the fifth grade. Language Certificates make it easier for the students to study abroad. The small class sizes (currently max. 15 Students per class) and the tutoring system allows children whose mother tongue is not German or those who have difficulty learning in large classes, to be more successful.

The Förderverein, run by the parents, supports the school. Waivered or reduced fees allow families with low income to take advantage of the school, so it is not a purely private school.

Students, parents, management and teachers are 100% committed to this school that is based on international and interreligious inclusion. The unique concept, developed by educators and developmental psychologists, has made the IFK/CIS a school where multilingualism lives and where the individual development of every student comes first and foremost. Since the founding of the school in 2007, the campus has been extended step by step, always with the aim to reinforce the concept. In 2016 the first students took their Abitur and IB Exams and the results were excellent. Already the school has made a name for itself beyond the Cologne area and this underpins the future success of the school.