

www.schools500reformation.net

"500 Protestant schools around the world celebrate 500 years of Reformation"

"Milestones"

A Vision of Celebrating 500 years of Reformation in Protestant schools worldwide

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation is the reason, motivation and impulse to build a worldwide network of Protestant schools and to show their shared roots and convictions. Protestant schools can be found in Europe and Africa, in Asia, Australia and America. We should become aware that the existing plurality of these schools means a great boon and riches for Protestant educational institutions. In spite of all diversities we are connected in our common faith and the roots of the Reformation. Hence we should find out what we have in common and what separates us. In assuming different perspectives we will create new partnerships. By gradually preparing the commemoration of October 31st, 2017 and by its worldwide celebration we want to build a network across countries and continents, which may last beyond 2017 and continue afterwards. Each participating school will be rewarded a plaque/ a badge and a logo of the project, thus being a manifest part of a worldwide network of Protestant schools.

1. Project description

1.1. The project "500 Protestant schools around the world celebrate 500 years of Reformation" has the following goals:

- A worldwide network of Protestant schools begins to exist and to grow
- Protestant schools are celebrating together and learning together with regard to the Reformation in the past, the present and the future.
- Protestant schools share their faith in Jesus Christ and the biblical tradition in intercultural (across different cultural) contexts.
- Protestant schools promote democratic citizenship inspired by the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Protestant schools lobby and take responsibility for each other (globally?)
- Protestant schools work together on developing their protestant ethos, their profiles and their teaching and learning.

1.2. Participants in the project:

Protestant schools of all kinds from all over the world are invited to take part. Regional structures as well as a small central structure are offered. Every participating school will get a logo as a sign of its participation. The logo will be a tree growing out of a cross combined with the short formula "schools500reformation" and 2017.

1.3. Disseminating the project:

The project will be disseminated in the following ways:

- through an interactive internet platform which provides participation for all the parties involved (such as students, teachers, principals, bodies/foundations who run the schools). Schools and organisations responsible for schools will be marked in two different colours. Links to the websites of schools and organisations will be included.
- through coordinators and experts entrusted with the responsibility of promoting and enabling activities of the project and the Reformation jubilee in schools worldwide and in contact with each other. These coordinators will have the mandate of disseminating information of the project in their region.

- through international events dealing with the themes/milestones of the project.

1.4. **The project focuses on the following messages:**

"Rediscover roots in the reformation worldwide"

"Love each other – serve others in the global world today"

"Take responsibility and speak up – locally and globally"

"Celebrate faith – live life"

1.5. **Beginning of the project:**

The project started in spring 2013 in Eisenach, Germany, with an international conference to launch it. An international steering group has been build up, with a German and EKD nucleus, guiding and developing the project up to 2017.

There will be a key theme in each of the following years from 2014 to 2016 that should become a focus in the participating schools. Results of activities will be presented and displayed in an online event, which will take place on 31st October of each year up to 2017. The first phase of spreading information about the project and giving it life lasts until 31st October 2014.

1.6. **Languages**

The project website has an introduction in English, French, German and Spanish, but also contributions in other languages by participants can be included..

II. The milestones in detail

2013: Let the project begin

In 2013 the project started with an International Preparatory Conference. The website *schools500reformation* will go online in summer and the schools will registrate as participants.

In detail:

The launch took place in April 2013 with an international conference.

The website will be installed. Schools will be invited to register on the website.

Every school participating in the project plants a fruit tree and receives the logo *schools500reformation* for the front of its school. The planting should take place in October 2013.

2014: "Rediscover roots in the Reformation worldwide"

The theme in 2014 leads Protestant educational institution to discover and reflect their special and individual roots in Reformation. Their individual profiles as school in a special environment and country will be made visible as well as the richness of belief. They have the opportunity to introduce themselves from the perspective of their own historical links with the Reformation by comparing their local situations in 1514/1517, or other dates of Reformation and 2014/17).The variety of Protestantism will become visible in video clips, songs, theatre scenes, small texts, poems and other forms of creative expressions. The participating

schools are invited to present themselves on the website. Stories of the schools are collected up to 31st October and published as a printed book.

The schools look for international partners worldwide to twin and to build up partnerships. Forms of communication between pupils, teachers, principals, those who run the school, are found and installed (SMS, twitter, Facebook...?)

Visible Event on 31st October, 2014: Schools can plant a further tree, participate in an online event, for example in performing a Reformation song

2015: "Love each other – serve others in the global world today"

Serving others will be the focus of activities in 2015. The schools organize sponsored runnings on/around 31st October 31 (for possibilities to meet each other and other benefits...). A run to the United Nations for lobbying for Protestant schools has to take place with international participants.

Principals of Protestant schools worldwide meet at an international conference, travel to Reformation places and share knowledge about learning and teaching.

2016: "Take responsibility and speak up – locally and globally"

Freedom and responsibility are the main issues focused by Protestant schools in 2016. Schools will remember these important topics of Reformation and the great reformers and reflect its impact on current and future tasks of Protestantism in the world. "Here I stand, I can do nothing else" - how is freedom and responsibility demonstrated in the life of the participants and in the daily life of their institution? How can schools and pupils take responsibility in their school, church, village, in other countries...?

2017: "Celebrate faith – live life"

In 2017 the thematic aspects of the previous years will be merged into events of celebrating. It is time not only to remember Reformation and the challenges of Protestantism but to celebrate, to make visible and to network.

There will be

- a central church service and local services as well,
- Participation of some representatives of schools in the international youth camp in Wittenberg,
- Online-events and regional meetings with dancing, singing, theatre, stories, etc.
- Visiting partner schools,
- The Project book arrives in Wittenberg with contributions for an ongoing Reformation.

And then.....?It's up to us to keep the network going ..