PRESS RELEASE--SPRACHFEST

[number] German students from [Name] High School [will compete this coming/competed this past] Saturday, Feb. 4, at the Sprachfest South Texas regional German contest, [to be] held at UTSA in San Antonio. Every year, 500-700 German students from 20-25 high schools throughout South Texas compete in a wide variety of events, including competitions in music, academic knowledge, arts and crafts, extemporaneous and conversational speaking, skits, and declamation. Among the popular events are the "Pass auf!" ("Pay attention!") quiz bowl, folk dancing, polka band, and gingerbread house construction. Participants compete at their level of German, and are awarded ribbons and trophies in individual and group events. Schools receive sweepstakes points based on their overall success, and compete for culture sweepstakes, academic sweepstakes, and overall sweepstakes honors.

Students who rank in the top five in most events will advance to the Texas State German Contest, to be held at Texas State University in San Marcos on Saturday, Feb. 25, to compete against qualifiers from regional contests held in Fort Worth for North Texas and Houston for East Texas. Nearly 1000 students will participate at the state level. Teachers, exchange students, college students, professors, and many other community members, including native Germans in the area, act as judges for the competitions.

Sprachfest was first held in 1976: regional contests in North Texas and the Houston area were founded in 1972 and 1980. The Texas State German Contest was introduced in 1982 to allow students to move to the next level of competition. The three regional contests and state contest comprise the largest German contest system in the United States, with nearly 1500 participants from 90 schools. More information on Sprachfest can be found on the event website at www.sprachfest.org ; the website for the Texas State German Contest is www.texasstategermancontest.org.