

THE BAVARIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

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Introduction

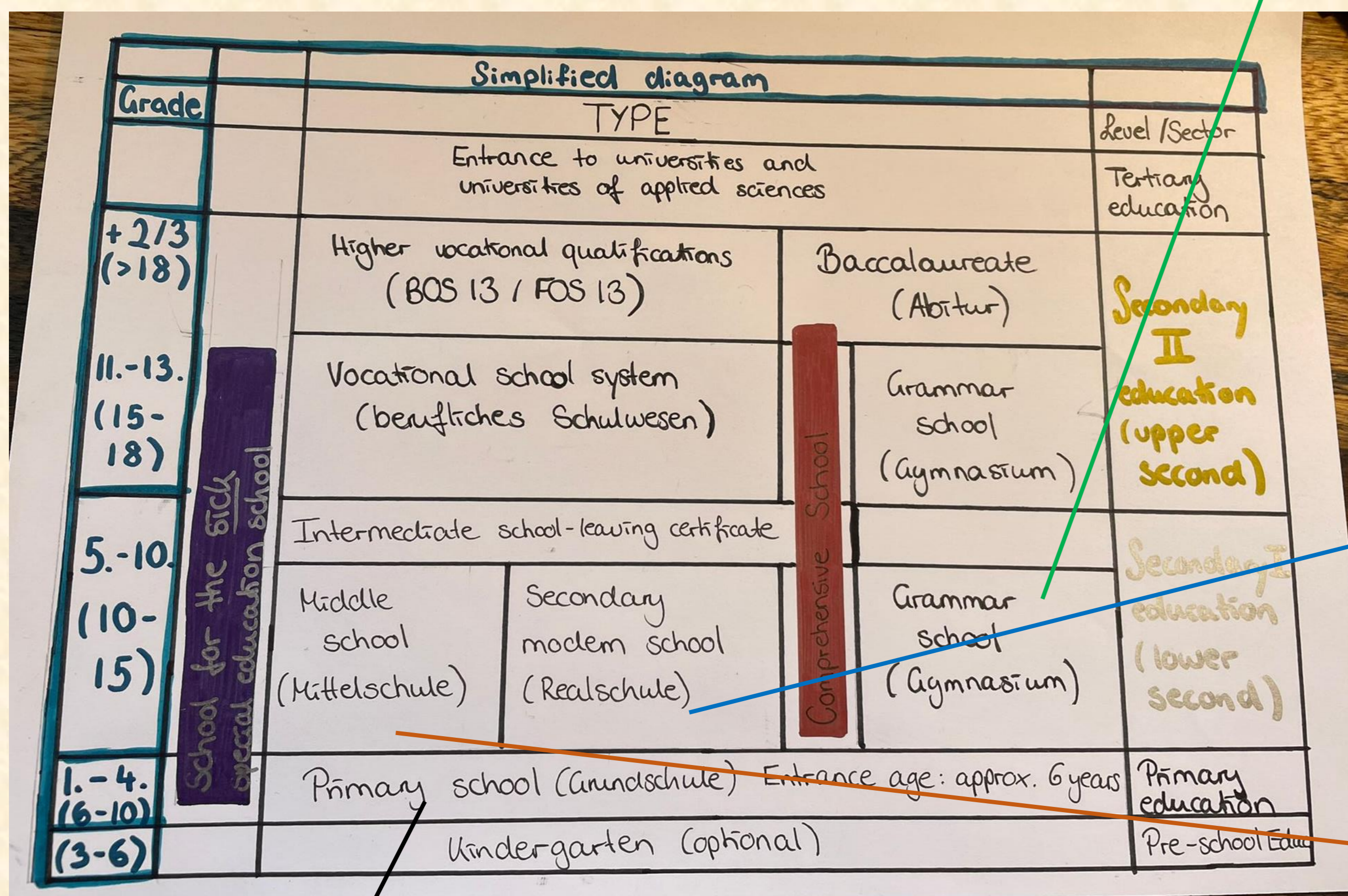
The responsibility for education belongs to the state according to Art. 7 I GG and it is consequently financed by the taxpayer. Furthermore, the competence for cultural and educational matters lies with the federal states (dt. Bundesländer) which means that there are 16 different educational systems that are financed by the individual federal states (86%). These educational systems are not regulated by the central government and all legislation is codified in the constitution (Grundgesetz). There is no mandatory pre-school education, although there are noncompulsory child care options. Students start their education at primary school and later (at the age of 10/ 11) have the options of Mittelschule, Realschule, Gymnasium, Gesamtschule and FOS/ BOS. More will be explained later.

In 2021/22 10.9 million students were registered at schools nationwide, 1.6 million of whom went to school in Bavaria. A ministry is responsible for these students, but as there are 16 different federal education systems, every federal state has its own ministry responsible for educational and cultural matters. In Bavaria this ministry is led by Prof. Michael Piaolo. They are coordinated by the KMK, The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder, which is a consortium of the ministers of the federal states. They are responsible for education and schooling, institutes of higher education and research and cultural affairs. The KMK was founded in 1948 and is tasked with ensuring the necessary commonality in educational research and cultural issues of cross-state significance. One of the tasks is to help create equal living conditions across Germany and promote the shared cultural interests of the federal states.

5th grade: English as a foreign language
6th grade: French/Latin as a foreign language
8th grade: French as a foreign language (optional)
10th grade: Spanish/Italian/other languages as a foreign language (optional)
 → after 10th grade: Students pass the **Mittlere Reife** automatically

Abitur: German + Maths + Foreign language + Science + Social science

- 433 schools
- 314 000 students



5th grade: English
7th grade: Focus on Languages (French)/ Science/ Economics (business economics)/ Arts/ Social focus

Mittlere Reife: German + Maths + English + 4th subject (focus subject)

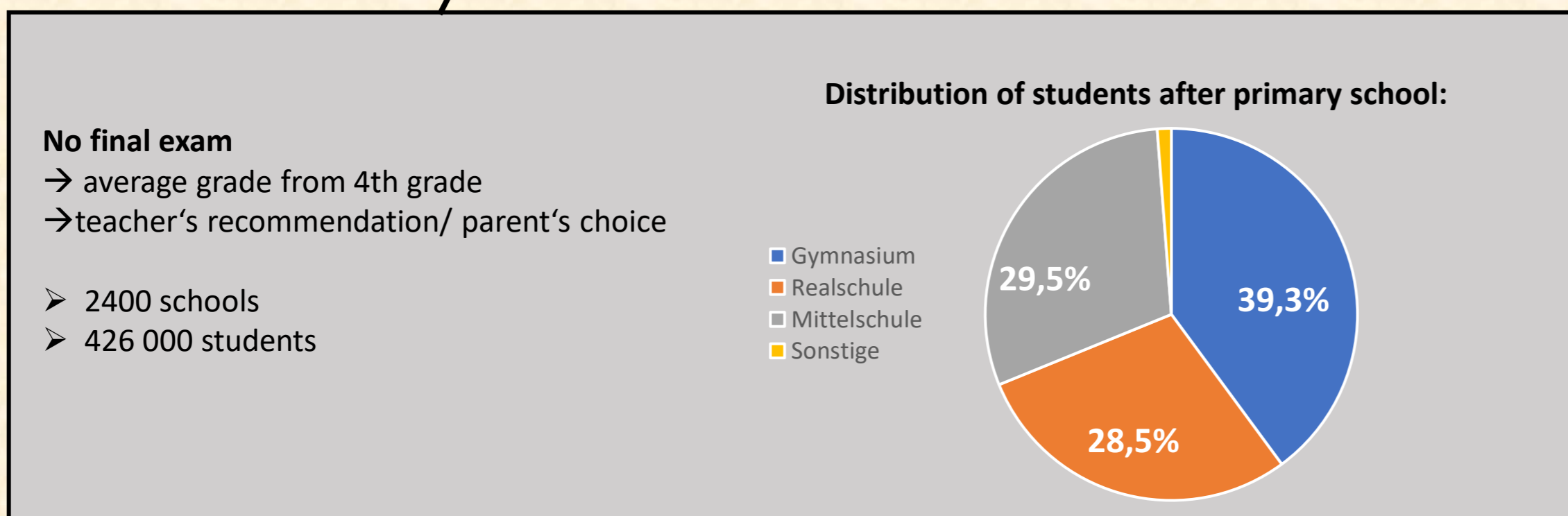
- 239 schools
- 220 000 students

5th grade: English as a foreign language

Qualifizierender Hauptschulabschluss: German + Maths + English + Practical Exam + Science + Social science

Optional for good students (better than 2,33): „M-Zweig“ → they stay until 10th grade and write the Mittlere Reife Exam

- 950 schools
- 190 000 students



Other schools:
 School for students with special needs
 Private schools (Montessori, Waldorf, Religious funding, ...)

Current problems:

- **Shortage of teachers:** Currently there is a shortage of 650 teachers for the next school year.
- **Full-day schools:** Beginning 2026 there will be the legal right for full-day primary education.
- **Immigration:** In the year 2020/2021 23,3% of students were immigrants. These students are highly disadvantaged in equality of educational opportunity (50% go to Mittelschule and only 9% to Gymnasium).

General interesting facts:

- **Federal system:** Every federal state has its own system which makes comparability difficult.
- **Changes of curriculum:** In Bavaria the curriculum changes every 10 to 15 years.
- **Evaluation:** Bavarian schools are evaluated professionally every 5 years.

Sources

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