PRESS RELEASE--HOUSTONFEST

[number] German students from [Name] High School [will compete this coming/competed this past] Saturday, February 8, at the Houstonfest regional German contest at Kingwood High School. Every year, about 500 German students from about 20 schools in the Houston area compete in a wide variety of events, including 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, medals, and trophies in individual and group events. Schools receive sweepstakes points for each event in which they place and compete for overall sweepstakes honors.

Students who rank[ed] in the top five in any event will advance to the Texas State German Contest on Saturday, March 1, at Texas State University in San Marcos. At State the winners of Houstonfest will compete against qualifiers from the other two Texas regional contests, Sprachfest in the Austin/San Antonio area and Winterfest in the Dallas area. Teachers, exchange students, college students, professors, and many other community members, including native Germans in the area, act as judges for the competitions.

[If using this press release after the regional contest, discuss the specific awards your students won here.]

Houstonfest was first held in 1980; the regional contests in North Texas and South Texas were founded in 1972 and 1976, respectively. The Texas State German Contest was introduced in 1982 to create a further level of competition. The three regional contests and state contest comprise the largest German contest system in the United States, with around 1000 students participating statewide each year. More information on Houstonfest can be found at www.houstonfest.org; the website for the Texas State German Contest is www.texasstategermancontest.org.