

German Immersion School will move to University Ave.



Darby Burton, 9, a third-grader, just can't wait to get to school every day and speak only German. Burton's school, the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS), currently located at 1399 Eustis St., in St. Anthony Park, has outgrown its space and will be moving to its new location at 1745 University Ave. (Photo by Terry Faust)

By DEBORAH BROTZ

Darby Burton, 9, a third-grader, just can't wait to get to school every day and speak only German. And, she is not the only one who feels this way. Burton's school, the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS), currently located at 1399 Eustis St., in St. Anthony Park, has outgrown its space and will be moving to its new location at 1745 University Ave. in St. Paul's Midway area this summer to be open for the start of school in fall 2008.

TCGIS is a K-3 charter school which was developed by an independent group of teachers and parents under the sponsorship of the Germanic-American Institute. The school is dedicated to educating children for bilingual, informed and active world learning. "The world is driven by international markets and international relationships," said Mary-Fred Bausman-Watkins, director of operations for the school. "You have to be competitive on a global basis. Children who have been through immersion programs are more open and flexible in understanding other cultures."

Burton, who has been going to TCGIS since first grade, loves

going to school there.

"I like it because I get to speak German for the whole day," she said. "We have English class so we learn a little here and there. But, my favorite subject is physical education."

In addition to giving more children the chance to learn German, Burton thinks moving to a new location might be good for another reason.

"I'll miss the old place we're in right now," she said. "Now, I'll have to get used to a new part of town. It's good I will know more of the town."

Learning German now will help Burton in the future.

"It will help me through high school," she said. "If I speak German at such a young age, I can get a scholarship for college."

With a German uncle, aunt, and two cousins living in Frankfurt, Germany, Burton has visited Germany twice.

"You don't pay with dollars, quarters, and nickels," she said. "You pay with the euro. It's worth more than a dollar. A \$1 euro is a coin and a \$2 euro is a coin, but we have only \$1 and \$2 bills."

Burton wanted to learn German so she could speak to her rel-

atives in that language when she visited. She is so glad her mother decided to send her to the TCGIS.

"It's important to me because I not only get to learn one language, I get to learn two languages, English and German," she said. "I'm bilingual. You get to learn a language while making friends. I get to learn new things."

Working hard at school doesn't scare Burton. She is always willing to learn more.

"I'm hoping to learn more German so I can talk to my cousins in German," she said. "I speak German, but I don't know what to do for all things."

Bausman-Watkins thinks people want to learn German because of the way it's taught.

"I think the draw is immersion," she said. "They really want immersion. They like the curriculum. They like the way we do it."

Parents also like the school's smallness, the way the classrooms look, and the fact the German language has some distinct career possibilities.

"Germany is an economically sound country with businesses all over the world," said Bausman-Watkins. "It's not just about being open to service industries."

Living in a global world, children who are taught to be global citizens have better understanding of the world.

"Global citizenship is about respecting and understanding people around the world," said Bausman-Watkins. "It's about seeing yourself in a larger context."

The school believes that children who know more than one language will be better prepared for life in the 21st century.

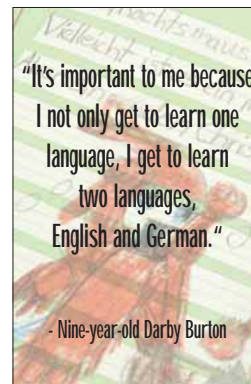
"There has been research that children who learn more than one language do better at school," said Bausman-Watkins. "They're better thinkers and problem-solvers. They have to work very, very hard

here because of the foreign language."

Sharing space at the new Midway location with Avalon School, a charter school with project based learning at high school level, TCGIS can not get to its full K-8 configuration without Avalon moving. With a five-year lease, the school plans to just continue to grow.

"We're really excited about that," said Bausman-Watkins. "Every year since we opened we have been full to capacity."

The biggest plus for the school's Midway location is how central it is.



outcome both in the academic and creative part of it. I'm pleased wanting a second language turned into a global experience from the education point of view."

Borgren's children have benefited from being at TCGIS.

"There's always the confidence and pride you have of being able to speak a second language," she said. "My kids have a much broader global concept. They're not Americentric. They know more than just about America."

According to Borgren, being bilingual opens up Europe for higher education, travel, and business.

"A bilingual child sets themselves up for learning other languages more efficiently," she said. "This is a gateway. If they're asked to learn Chinese, it will not be such a task."

Borgren feels having the TCGIS is very important to her because not only do her children get a good education, but they're learning to be successful in a global economy.

"The curriculum is unparalleled," she said. "The fact they're walking out every day with a full day of speaking in another language is wonderful. They're dissolving borders and opening up so many opportunities."

Starting with 43 students in 2005, TCGIS grew to 87 students in 2006, and currently has 127 students in 2007. Adding a grade every year, the school will continue to grow at its new location but will remain a relatively small school with only two classrooms per grade level.

"My hopes are the new location will reflect the dynamic learning happening in the classroom," said Bausman-Watkins. "We hope to become a wonderful gem of a school in the Midway, a wonderful, nurturing, bilingual community to be part of."

Our Mission

is to continue to improve the quality of life in the community by supporting active and engaged residents with programming that educates, develops leadership and promotes participation.

District 6 Planning Council's 2008 Annual Meeting & Elections will be held April 14, 2008 at St. Bernard's Parish Center, 147 W. Geranium beginning at 6:30 PM. Child Care will be provided at no cost - please RSVP your child care needs to District 6, 651-488-4485 no later than April 1, 2008. Snacks will be served!

To be eligible for any Board seat you must live or own a business in the precinct area:

- 1 Open Seat Precinct 1-Larpenteur, Dale, Maryland, Rice
- 2 Open Seats Precinct 2-Larpenteur, 35 E, Maryland, Rice
- 2 Open Seats Precinct 4-Maryland, Rice, Burlington RR, Dale
- Five Open Seats District Wide-you may live or work anywhere within the District 6 boundaries

A quote from a new member:

"I had always wanted to get more involved in my community, learn more and make a difference. I took the plunge last year and began showing up to District 6 meetings and it has changed my life and helped my community. As a fairly new member of the Board, I encourage anyone wanting to get more involved in their community to consider attending and even participate in our elections. Serving on the District 6 Board has been a truly challenging, yet rewarding experience."

Please join us for a fun, informative evening and please download a Board application from our website; www.district6stpaul.org, email us at district6@qwestoffice.net or call 651-488-4485 if you have questions!



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