

Twin Cities German Immersion School Board Meeting
Charter District 4152
January 3, 2005, 7:00 p.m.
1399 Eustis Street
Saint Paul, MN 55108

A. Opening Remarks and General Business

Board Chair Dr. Thekla Rura-Polley called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Board members Michael Sampson, Ken Greener, Gretchen Nessel, and Chris Eliassen were present. Board member James Pearson arrived at 7:35 pm and board members Ingrid Kvaal, Boje Siebels, and Sabine Engel were absent. TCGIS Director of Operations, Mary-Fred Bausman-Watkins, TCGIS Director of Curriculum, Marcy Zachmeier-Ruh, and TCGIS Office Manager, Brian Schnese were also present.

There were no opening remarks or general business items from the board chair.

B. Concerns, Comments, Questions

Mr. Sampson thanked Ms. Bausman-Watkins for her directors report. He also inquired about the student who recently un-enrolled. Ms. Bausman-Watkins and Ms. Zachmeier-Ruh explained the circumstances surrounding the departure of the student and some of the financial repercussions.

C. Approval of January 3rd 2006 Agenda

Ms. Bausman-Watkins requested accurate contact information from board members for the creation of school business cards. She also requested the addition of a discussion on the publishing of the school budget. Ms. Rura-Polley requested that item E be removed from the agenda as Ms. Beane was not present. Ms. Rura-Polley moved, Mr. Sampson seconded, to approve the December 6th, 2005 agenda with proposed amendments.. The motion carried 6 – 0.

D. Approval of December 6th 2005 Minutes

Dr. Rura-Polley moved, Ms. Nessel seconded, to approve the December 6th 2005 minutes as presented. The motion carried 6 – 0.

E. Introduce Kathleen Beane, Director of Kinderstube.

Ms. Beane was unfortunately unable to attend the meeting.

F. Financial Oversight

Dr. Rura-Polley raised awareness of new financial repercussions regarding the loss of one student. Mr. Eliassen presented the treasurer's report and explained the cash flow chart. Dr. Rura-Polley expressed her gratitude for the time and effort that has gone into the budget and stressed the importance of maintaining accurate financial figures. Ms. Nessel asked if families were going to be charged for milk. Mr. Schnese explained that once payment has been received for the claim that was submitted, we can issue invoices.

Mr. Greener moved, Mr. Sampson seconded, to approve the November 16th – December 15th check register as presented. The motion carried 6 – 0.

Mr. Eliassen moved, Mr. Sampson seconded, to approve the presented list of donations from December 1st to December 20th. The motion carried 6 – 0.

G. Teacher Hiring for 2006-2007

Dr. Rura-Polley thanked Ms. Zachmeier-Ruh for the progress on the hiring of new teachers and interns. Ms. Zachmeier-Ruh gave her report on the status of teacher and intern hiring. She said that she had leads on a special education teacher and a number of interns. Dr. Rura-Polley suggested the use of the German Arbeitsamt as a source for interns or teachers. She also stressed the need to monitor this situation monthly and set a deadline in March where we will need to see major progress. Mr. Pearson suggested having a back-up plan, should hiring not go as planned. Dr. Rura-Polley inquired about the progress on licensure of the current teachers. Ms. Zachmeier-Ruh reported that with the exception of one, all teachers have been issued licenses. Dr. Rura-Polley requested that Teacher Hiring remain an ongoing agenda item.

H. Board Composition and Elections

Mr. Pearson reported on the status of current board member terms and asked all board members to clarify their intentions, interest, and commitment in serving. The Minnesota law which states that a charter school board should be comprised of a majority of teachers was discussed. Potential teacher members were considered for nomination and Ms. Bausman-Watkins explained the request for a waiver should the board not be comprised of a majority of teachers.

Mr. Pearson outlined the need for a nominating committee and suggested Mr. Siebels as a potential member. Mr. Pearson and Ms. Bausman-Watkins volunteered to be members of the nominating committee.

Mr. Pearson opened a discussion on the role that the GAI has played as sponsor of the school. All board members agreed on the importance of sponsor participation and involvement at board meetings. Board members came up with ideas on how to promote and support regular board participation by the GAI.

The board agreed to hold its annual meeting on May 6th 2006 at the Tanz in den Mai event.

Mr. Pearson and Dr. Rura-Polley also lead a discussion on how to define the four different levels of membership more exactly. The nominating committee agreed to have suggestions for the next board meeting.

I. Kindergarten Curriculum

Dr. Rura-Polley outlined some small formatting corrections that the curriculum document would need. Mr. Pearson asked how the teachers were responding to the curriculum. Ms. Zachmeier-Ruh explained that Kindergarten is somewhat behind, but she plans to re-implement the missed skills. She explained that the acquisition of a classroom aide will help the re-implementation of curriculum and confirmed the flexibility of the document and openness towards teacher input. The board discussed how challenging and rigorous the Kindergarten curriculum is and also considered where implementation may be affecting the curriculum negatively. Mr. Pearson stressed his concern for the long term consequences of implementation struggles this year. Mr. Greener redefined the issue as whether or not the board entrusts the leaders of the school to meet the changing and unforeseen needs produced by the curriculum. He also stressed the advantage of being a small charter school is having the engagement and flexibility to correct, amend, change, and adapt the curriculum at will. Ms. Zachmeier-Ruh assured the board that problems with the curriculum have been behavioral in nature and in no way stemming from the language aspect.

Dr. Rura-Polley moved, Mr. Sampson seconded, to approve the Kindergarten curriculum in its entirety. The motion carried 5 – 0 with an abstention from Mr. Pearson.

J. Directors' performance review – job descriptions and format

Mr. Greener presented (2 handouts) revised job descriptions for the two director positions. He explained that they are self evaluative and could be used exclusively without the use of faculty evaluations. The board discussed the advantages and disadvantages to letting directors issue and collect their own faculty evaluations. The board asked Mr. Greener to add a section about specific and measurable goals that were met and also a section about faculty evaluations. He was also asked to create a time line for when these documents should be submitted in respect to contract renewal and teacher rehiring rehiring. Dr. Rura-Polley expressed her gratitude for Mr. Greener's hard work and time on the evaluations.

K. Committee Reports

Dr. Rura-Polley thanked both the facilities and finance committees for their time and effort. Ms. Bausman-Watkins stressed the importance of good communication between the two committees concerning finances and things that may affect the budget.

The board discussed which sections and in what format the budget should be posted. They agreed that the budget should be posted on the website in the format proposed by Ms. Bausman-Watkins (handout).

L. Other Business

Board members debated the pros and cons of membership in the Midway Chamber of Commerce after having been invited to join. All agreed that the school should join for one year and reevaluate membership after that.

Board members agreed to change board meetings to **Wednesdays** and the following dates have been approved for board meetings:

February 8th, 2006
March 8th, 2006
April 19th, 2006
May 10th, 2006

Ms. Nasset suggested that the board consider the option of a full day Kindergarten for next year.

Mr. Greener moved, Mr. Pearson seconded, to adjourn. The motion carried 6 – 0.

The board meeting was adjourned at 9:53 PM.

TCGIS Board Secretary

By: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Date December 6th 2005 Minutes Approved by TCGIS Board: _____

Date December 6th 2005 Minutes sent to MN Dept. Education: _____