

Twin Cities German Immersion School Board Meeting
Charter District 4152
September 29, 2009, 6:30 p.m.
1745 University Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104

Call to Order and Attendance

Board Chair Andrew Oxenham called the meeting to order at 6:31p.m.

Board Members Andrew Oxenham, Kim Kompel, Holly Wiste, Susanne Grimm, Mary Zellmer-Bruhn, Rebecca Hauth-Schmid and Debra Haessly were present.

Gretchen Nessel arrived at 6:35; Ken Greener arrived at 6:39; Jürgen Konczak arrived at 6:45.

Also present were TCGIS Director Annika Fjelstad, volunteer clerk and TCGIS parent Lisa Friedman, Mary-Fred Watkins, Nancy Bostrom, and Britta Walker.

A. Approval of September 29th, 2009 Agenda

Mr. Oxenham indicated that brief Board committee updates were to be added to the strategic planning portion of the agenda and Ms. Zellmer-Bruhn would be presenting information regarding the school's proposed strategic planning process. In addition, Ms. Wiste and Ms. Kompel would update the Board on the school's technology committee and the outdoor plan respectively.

Moved by Ms. Hauth-Schmid, seconded by Ms. Wiste, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried 8:0.

B. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of August 25, 2009 Minutes

b. Donation register

c. Payment register

Mr. Oxenham updated the consent agenda to add the approval of the minutes from the Board Retreat held August 29th. Mr. Oxenham presented minor corrections on the August 25th minutes to Ms. Kompel.

Moved by Ms. Zellmer-Bruhn, seconded by Ms. Hauth-Schmid, that the consent agenda be approved as amended. Motion carried 8:0.

C. Academic Oversight

a. Amity Interns

Mary-Fred Bausman-Watkins presented a letter from the Amity Institute. TGGIS has historically had 1 intern per classroom and additional ones with the specialists. This year we have 12. Ms. Watkins had met with Trudy Hermann, the Director of the Amity Institute, to discuss the cooperation between the Amity Institute and TCGIS. Due to the fact that the numbers of interns are increasing every year as we add classes and the grant that currently covers the costs associated with the amity intern program is ending, it was acknowledged that the current fee structure is unsustainable. The Amity Institute has proposed a revised fee structure. Ms. Watkins would like to the Board to indicate its commitment to the Amity program by its December meeting so that she may follow up with the Amity Institute. In January, Ms. Watkins will be interviewing for the fall semester. Ms. Fjelstad reported that staff is appreciative of the extra help in the classroom and having a model of excellent German. The Board thanked Ms. Watkins for her role in creating the positive relationship TCGIS currently has with the Amity Institute.

b. Third Language

Mr. Oxenham presented the draft of a survey proposed for the wider school community regarding the addition of a third language in the 6th grade. The results of the survey would be one of several factors in making a final decision as to what language to offer. Discussion ensued regarding why an additional survey is needed and how it differs from previous surveys. It was also discussed as to how the third language would be incorporated into the middle school curriculum. It was acknowledged that although right now it does not seem operationally viable to offer a third language as an elective, it would be good to know if there is a desire in the community to have it be elective as opposed to mandatory. The Board also discussed the fact that an open forum or informational session may be a helpful part of the process with the goal of clearly articulating the process and information gathered up to this point. A decision will need to be made by the Board soon, so that staffing and curriculum can be planned for. Ms. Bostrom offered to receive questions and comments on the survey from Board members and to work with Ms. Fjelstad on a final draft of the survey.

Moved by Ms. Hauth-Schmid, seconded by Ms. Kompel that we approve the parent survey for Third Language acquisition as amended. Motion carried 10:0.

D. Financial Oversight

a. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Debra Haessly reported on the recent Finance Committee meeting. She reviewed the August financial report in the Board packet. She noted that teacher salaries are not yet fully represented in the figures. Our state funding is for the 201 students enrolled at the beginning of the school year, our expenses and revenues were budgeted based on a projected 190 students, and the enrollment is currently 196 students. TCGIS will notify the State of the change in student enrollment in December. The Board's previous decision to ask the parents to contribute \$50 per student to cover the costs of educational materials ordered from Germany has yet to be implemented. Ms. Fjelstad is following up on this.

Ms. Fjelstad reported to the Finance Committee on the new insurance plan with Health Partners, which begins on Nov. 1. TCGIS has been advised by SBS that 25-30% has been recommended as the new fund-balance goal. The annual audit is in the final review process. Some budget revisions were made to address the need for immediate short-term classroom and office assistance.

Moved by Ms. Haessly, seconded by Ms. Hauth-Schmid that Ms. Fjelstad be approved to hire short-term temporary and/or hourly instructional or clerical personnel either on payroll or contract for a total dollar amount not to exceed \$2000 between now and the FY2010 budget revision, which should be completed in November. Motion carried 10:0.

b. K-Plus program

Ms. Fjelstad explained that the fee structure that the Board approved in July did not adequately address the county reimbursement structure for free and reduced lunch students and therefore needs to be revised. Families affected by the revised fees will be notified.

Moved by Ms. Zellmar-Bruhn, seconded by Ms. Hauth-Schmid to approve the new sliding scale for the K-Plus program proposed by Ms. Fjelstad. Motion carried 10:0.

E. Strategic Planning

a. Hiring Update

Moved by Ms. Hauth-Schmid, seconded by Ms. Wiste, to approve the contract to hire Nicole Halvorson as a third grade teacher at 1 FTE. Motion carried 10:0.

b. Enrollment/Recruiting Update

The school's enrollment remains at 196.

c. Policy Approvals

i. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Greener presented the revised wording for the Pledge of Allegiance policy.

Moved by Mr. Greener, seconded by Ms. Hauth-Schmid, to approve the policy as presented. Motion carried 10:0.

ii. Volunteer Policy

Ms. Kompel presented the proposed Volunteer Policy and Volunteer Code of Conduct. She explained that having two separate documents would allow the Volunteer Code of Conduct to be revised without having to come back to the Board. Revisions to the Volunteer Policy were suggested. The Volunteer Policy will be revised to remove "professional" when referring to the code of conduct and "failure to follow these guidelines may result in a revocation of volunteer privileges" will also be deleted.

Moved by Ms. Kompel, seconded by Ms. Grimm, that the Volunteer Policy, as amended, be approved. Motion carried 10:0.

d. Board Committee Updates

i. Grants Committee

Mr. Konczak reported that there are 4-5 new members to the committee. They have not yet formally met, but have informally discussed their goals for the coming year: 1) Focus on larger grants, 2) Improve external relations with the wider community, including the corporate world. 3) Investigate possible additional support from the German government and to cultivate our relationship with them.

There was discussion related to the fact that the PTO and other school committees should discuss any smaller grant applications with the Grants Committee before submission.

ii. Governance Committee

Ms. Kompel indicated that the committee has not yet met but she would like to have a first meeting in the later part of October. The committee will be following up on revising the Board's by-laws and determining a committee work plan.

e. Strategic plan

Ms. Nessel left at 8:30pm

Ms. Zellmer-Bruhn presented information related to two different programs that may be able to help the school with its strategic planning process. GVC (Graduate Volunteer Consultants) is made up of teams of 4-5 students volunteering during the spring semester (January to April) for a total of about 150

hours over 6-8 weeks. They provide business-consulting services to non-profits in the Twin Cities. They have indicated that they would entertain an application from TCGIS and the application deadline is October 15th. The second group is Consulting Enterprise and it is possible they could also help after the initial process with GVC. The Board discussed what the process would be like and how much time it would take from the staff.

Ms. Kompel moved, seconded by Mr. Greener, that the Board authorize Ms. Zellmer-Bruhn to submit an application to the Carlson School of Business Graduate Volunteer Consultants. Motion carried 9-0.

F. Other Business

a. School Committee Updates

i. Technology Committee

Ms. Wiste gave an update. She also suggested that Technology should be a line item in the Budget. It was asked that the Technology Committee put together a budget and bring it to the Finance Committee.

ii. Facilities Committee

Ms. Kompel updated the Board that the outdoor concept plan has not yet been submitted to the City. The landscape architect working with the school indicated that the amount of earth required to be moved is perhaps too much for a volunteer project with a limited budget. Ms. Kompel has been trying to determine if there are volunteers with the required machinery and expertise to build the plan. If not, the plan will be revised.

G. Adjourn

Moved by Mr. Oxenham, seconded by Ms. Zellmer-Bruhn, to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Motion carried 9:0.

Next Regular Board Meeting: October 27, 6:30 p.m.

Action Items from the September 29 Board Meeting:

All Board members: send feedback on draft of Third Language Survey to Nancy Bostrom by Oct. 6.

Twin Cities German Immersion School Board Secretary

Name: Kimberly Kompel

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 11/13/09

Date September 29, 2009 minutes approved by TCGIS Board: 10/27/09