

Twin Cities German Immersion School Board Meeting
Charter District 4152
October 27, 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 6:40 p.m. Board Members Kimberly Kompel, Holly Wiste, Mary Zellmer-Bruhn, Rebecca Hauth-Schmid, Debra Haessly, Jürgen Konczak, Ken Greener, and Gretchen Nettet were present. Susanne Grimm arrived at 6:45. Also present were TCGIS Director Annika Fjelstad, volunteer clerk and TCGIS parent Lisa Friedman, 5th grade teacher Marcy Zachmeier-Ruh, Nancy Bostrom from the GAI oversight committee, and a few parents.

A. Approval of October 27th, 2009 Agenda

Mr. Oxenham suggested a new order of items on the agenda, moving 3rd language earlier and adding an update on the strategic planning process.

Moved by Ms. Hauth-Schmid, seconded by Mr. Konczak to accept the agenda as amended. Motion carried 9:0.

B. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of September 29th, 2009 Minutes
- b. Teacher Benefits Expenditure
- c. Donation register
- d. Payment register
- e. Committee Updates

Mr. Oxenham asked that the consent agenda be amended to include the committee updates. Ms. Kompel corrected that the next Facilities Committee meeting will be Nov. 12th, not Nov. 5th as stated in the committee update report.

Moved by Mr. Oxenham, seconded by Ms. Zellmer-Bruhn, that the consent agenda, as amended, be approved. Motion carried 9:0.

(Ms. Grimm arrived)

C. Third language

Ms. Bostrom presented the results of the 3rd language survey. There was an 81% response rate to the 3rd language survey. She reviewed the results printed in the Board packet. The Board expressed their thanks for her work. Mr. Oxenham updated the Board on the information session that was held Monday October 26th. Approximately 20-25 people attended. At the information session, Ms. Bostrom presented the survey results and then Tara Fortune, from the U of M CARLA Institute, specializing in language acquisition and Shannon Peterson, the Curriculum Director for a Spanish immersion charter school that recently implemented Chinese as the third language, both spoke. The Board discussed major points brought up at the information session, including the importance of the teacher, using the third language to support the core curriculum, the benefits and potential challenges to offering a third language, and that the relative ease of learning either language is probably the same.

Mr. Oxenham observed that there are several issues to be decided, beyond just which 3rd language to offer. He suggested that the Board focus on deciding the language, then ask the administration to make recommendations on program specific details such as whether it can be optional, at which grade levels it would offered, how much time per week it will be offered, and if it will have a dedicated classroom or not.

Moved by Mr. Oxenham, seconded by Mr. Greener, that TCGIS adopt Spanish as the target 3rd language and the administration should develop a curriculum proposal for the Board's consideration later this year. Motion carried 10:0.

D. Financial Oversight

a. Treasurer's Report

Ms. Haessley presented a summary of the Finance Committee meeting held October 15, 2009. The committee is finishing up the revised budget. One student has been added (ADM now at 197). The goal is to be able to present the revised budget at the November Board meeting. There are still some payroll issues that need to be corrected. Unemployment insurance was under-budgeted, due to the fact that this year the school may be liable for the first time. Mr. Oxenham stated that the Board needs to re-evaluate its policy on unemployment insurance before Dec. 1st. Currently, the school does not carry unemployment insurance. This decision was originally reached based on the school's size at that time and the number of staff that would not be eligible. Now that the school is larger the option is to start to pay for unemployment insurance or to use the money that would pay for the insurance to create a fund that would be used to pay for unemployment benefits, should the situation arise. There was discussion related to the pros and cons of each option. The Board will address this issue at its November meeting.

E. Strategic Planning

a. Employee Benefits Proposal

Ms. Fjelstad presented the information included in the Board packets regarding 3 proposed changes to employee benefits: sick leave for educational assistants, employee tuition discount for extended kindergarten, and salary increases to cover insurance costs for continuing employees. Ms. Fjelstad's goal is to create an Employment Handbook before the end of the school year.

Moved by Ms. Hauth-Schmid , seconded by Ms. Wiste , to provide 5 days sick leave for fulltime Educational Assistants. It will be a cumulative policy in which employees earn one day of sick leave after 30 days of work. Any accrued sick leave will expire upon the end of employment. Motion carried 10:0.

Moved by Ms. Kompel , seconded by Ms. Haessley , to provide a one-time increase in base salary to offset insurance costs for continuing employees not to exceed a total of \$4500. Motion carried 9:0. Ms. Grimm recused herself from the discussion and vote.

Ms. Fjelstad added an additional issue for the Board to act on. Due to confusion over paperwork associated with the Cobra program, four employees were not insured in Sept. and Oct. Although insurance premiums paid for this time were reimbursed, there are outstanding medical bills that were not paid by the insurance.

(Ms. Hauth-Schmid left at 8:40)

Moved by Ms. Kompel , seconded by Ms. Zellmer-Bruhn, pending consultation with Riverport, our

carrier for liability insurance, the Board approves pursuing the option to make good to uninsured insurance-eligible employees, including the option of payment of medical bills that would otherwise be covered by insurance incurred up to Oct. 26, not to exceed \$4,000 . Motion carried 9:0.

b. Strategic Plan Update

Ms. Zellmer-Bruhn informed the Board that the submitted application for a free-of-charge consulting project was accepted by GVC. The plan is to have a kick off meeting with the project leaders in November.

E. Adjourn

Moved by Mr. Oxenham, seconded by Ms. Zellmer-Bruhn, to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Motion carried 9:0.

Next Regular Board Meeting: November 24th, 6:30 p.m.

Action Items from the October 27, 2009 Board Meeting:

The administration will begin working on a curriculum proposal for Spanish as the 3rd language.

Ms. Haessley and the Finance Committee will work on a revised budget for approval at the Nov. Board Meeting.

Ms. Haessley and the Finance Committee will look into whether or not the Special Education Funds would also cover the costs of health insurance for paraprofessionals over the summer months.

Twin Cities German Immersion School Board Secretary

Name: Kimberly Kempe

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 11/30/09

Date October 27, 2009 minutes approved by TCGIS Board: 11/24/09