

**Twin Cities German Immersion School Board Meeting**  
**Charter District 4152**  
**December 15, 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 6:38p.m.

Board Members Kim Kompel, Holly Wiste, Susanne Grimm, Rebecca Hauth-Schmid, and Ken Greener were present. Board members Debra Haessly, Jürgen Konczak, and Mary Zellmer-Bruhn were absent.

Board member Gretchen Nessel arrived at 6:40

Also present were TCGIS Director Annika Fjelstad, Michelle Nellis, and TCGIS parent Nancy Mullholland.

**A. Approval of December 15, 2009 Agenda**

Mr. Oxenham suggested that the agenda be amended to move the strategic planning portion of the agenda ahead of Financial Oversight, as Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair Debra Haessly had not yet arrived.

*Moved by Ms. Wiste, seconded by Mr. Greener, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried 6:0.*

**B. Consent Agenda**

- a. Approval of November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Minutes
- b. Donation register
- c. Payment register
- d. School and Board Committee Reports

*Moved by Mr. Greener, seconded by Ms. Hauth-Schmid, that the consent agenda be approved. Motion carried 6:0.*

(Ms. Nessel arrived.)

**C. Strategic Planning**

**a. Approval of Annual Report**

Mr. Oxenham asked if the Board had any additional comments or questions regarding the proposed Annual Report. A few minor typos were identified but no other major concerns were raised.

*Moved by Ms. Wiste, seconded by Ms. Hauth-Schmid, that the Annual Report be approved. Motion carried 7:0.*

**b. Approval of the Director's Professional Development Plan**

Ms. Fjelstad's proposed Professional Development Plan was presented and discussed at the last Board meeting and was now presented for approval.

*Moved by Ms. Kompel, seconded by Ms. Wiste, that Director Fjelstad's Professional Development Plan be approved. Motion carried 7:0.*

### **c. Middle School Curriculum Review**

Ms. Fjelstad introduced the proposed changes for the Middle School Curriculum. Some of the proposed changes require board approval and some do not. The changes not requiring board action include those proposed in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. There will be a change in the English program. Frau Nellis will be shifting some of her time from being a mentor to Frau Heindl to teaching 4<sup>th</sup> grade English. This will allow Frau Wunsch, who is currently teaching 4<sup>th</sup> grade English to shift her time to heading up the new conflict resolution program which, until now, has been under Director Fjelstad. Frau Wunsch will also be partnering with Herr Solakhau to solidify the responsive classroom approach in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. These changes are budget neutral.

This is the first year implementing the 5<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum and the need for some adjustments has arisen. Ms. Fjelstad suggested that the originally approved goals of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum may be too ambitious. She proposed revising staffing and curriculum goals so that social studies will be taught in English for the remainder of the year. This will result in an increase in English instruction by two hours with a corresponding reduction of two hours in German instruction. In addition, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class will be split into two smaller groups three times a week where each group is taught back to back simultaneously so that teachers from each language can target instruction at developmentally appropriate levels. Frau Stephens and Frau Zachmeier-Ruh have been informed of the proposed changes and are supportive. Discussion ensued regarding the need to split up the class and how the anticipated costs of the program (approximately \$3,000 for the semester) are justified. The fact that linguistic issues may affect the students' ability to learn social studies was also discussed. It was stated that the changes would apply only for the current year, and that the plan would be re-evaluated at the end of the 2009-2010 academic year. The re-evaluation will form part of the more general middle school curriculum development and refinement, for which Ms. Fjelstad is currently considering staffing options. The topic of the how the MCAs fit into the curriculum goals for the school was also raised. Ms. Fjelstad is in the process of putting together an assessment committee and that would be one of the topics they would look into.

(Ms. Hauth-Schmid left at 7:35.)

*Moved by Ms. Kompel, and seconded by Ms. Wiste, that the curriculum adjustments as outlined in Plan B be approved and be re-evaluated at the end of the 2009/2010 academic year and that the Finance Committee incorporate the associated costs into the currently approved budget. Motion carried 6:0.*

### **d. Director's Report**

Ms. Fjelstad reviewed the report included in the Board packet. A subcommittee of the Grants and External Relations Committee has been putting together marketing materials to promote the school both for recruitment and for fundraising. Some of the older materials include slightly different versions of the school's mission. It was agreed that the current mission as listed on our website be used for all marketing materials. It was acknowledged that the mission should be updated as part of the proposed strategic planning process that will begin in January.

Ms. Fjelstad updated the Board on the Race To The Top program. It is a federal initiative to identify model education programs so that they can be replicated across the nation. The application is submitted by the states and the Minnesota Department of Education thinks that Minnesota has a good chance in the selection process. MDE is soliciting participation from individual school districts and charter schools. If TCGIS chooses to be part of the application process now and Minnesota is selected,

the school will have another opportunity to decide whether or not to participate. Participating schools will have access to grant funds based on the number of students. However, the funds will be likely be tied to the implementation of specific programs. Ms. Fjelstad requested that the Board become familiar with the program components so that the school will be prepared to decide whether to participate if Minnesota's application is successful. Announcement of the selections is expected in April. It was agreed that TCGIS should participate in the application process.

**e. Policy Approvals:**

**i. Cell Phone**

The need for this policy came to light during the 2009 annual audit. The Finance Committee had reviewed this policy before it was forwarded to the Board for approval. Ms. Kompel suggested that the second sentence in the purpose be removed. It was also suggested that the statement of policy be reworded to say: The Twin Cities German Immersion School will not reimburse for the costs associated with cell phone usage.

*Moved by Mr. Oxenhm, seconded by Ms. Haut Schmid, that the Cell Phone Policy, as amended be approved. Motion carried 7:0.*

**ii. Fund Balance**

The purpose of this policy is to provide fiscal guidance to board members when adopting an annual budget and when approving monthly expenditures. It is the intent of the school that the Finance Committee and the Board review this policy every year. Proposed changes include the increasing the target minimum amount of the fund balance (from 0.25% to 10% as well as the maximum amount (from 20% to 30%).

*Moved by Ms. Kompel., seconded by Ms. Grimm, that the Fund Balance Policy be approved. Motion carried 7:0.*

**f. Enrollment/Recruiting Update**

Ms. Fjelstad reported the latest enrollment numbers. The report has been updated to include numbers for the recruitment for the 2010/2011 school year. A few minor corrections were noted and clarification of some of the data was requested for future reports.

**D. Financial Oversight**

**a. Treasurer's Report**

Mr. Oxenham presented a summary of the most recent Finance Committee meeting. The financials are essentially in line with expectations. The Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS) recently sent an e-mail to all schools indicating that charter schools should plan for the possibility that the current 27% hold back will not be paid in full. The committee discussed ways to make the financial reports and budget easier to read and easier to ascertain what assumptions are used. SBS introduced a new account representative. Our current representative will still be at SBS but working in a different capacity. The committee was assured that the SBS representatives will work together to ensure a seamless transition.

**E. Adjourn**

*Moved by Mr. Oxenham, seconded by Ms. Wiste, to adjourn at 8:55pm. Motion carried 6:0.*

**Twin Cities German Immersion School Board Secretary**

Name: Kimberly Kangel

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 1/27/10

Date December 15, 2009 minutes approved by TCGIS Board: Jan. 26, 2010