



**April 8, 2010**

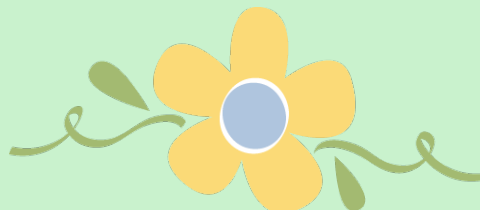
**Contents and Attachments:**

Reminders and Announcements, Letter from the Director, Board Meeting Summary, Board Approved Calendar for 2010-2011, Special Ed Advisory Committee, Calendar April & May

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Elternbrief deadline for articles and announcements is Monday mornings 9 AM.**

- **Spring Clean Up – Thanks!**  
Wow! Our school looks great. Some people think of break as a time for relaxing, but a large group of parents dedicated at least a portion of it to working hard on behalf of the school. The spring clean up crew cleaning up, spackled and painted our walls and installed cork strips to improve our ability to display art work. **Extra grand thanks to:** Ursula Hargens, Jim Crego, Marcus Sheire, Ina Elliot, Sarah Edmonds, Laura & Eric Hauer, Jennifer & William Turnquist, Janet Lenius, Alexandra Weeding, and Jo Nelson.
- **We are looking for volunteers to serve on the TCGIS Board!**  
The deadline for **SCHOOL BOARD NOMINATIONS** is fast approaching. All nominations are due on **Friday April 16<sup>th</sup>**. Please consider volunteering for a board position or take the time to recommend someone who you think would be willing to support the school in this way. The School Board election will be held Thursday May 20<sup>th</sup>. Three seats on the board will be up for election.  
More information and application materials are available on the TCGIS website. If you have any questions or would like more information please contact Board Secretary Kimberly Kompel at [kimberlykompel@gmail.com](mailto:kimberlykompel@gmail.com) or at 651-414-0304.



## Facilities Committee

We are looking for new members to join the Facilities Committee. While we welcome anyone who is willing to volunteer, there are two specific areas of need:

1. people with a background in architecture, construction, carpentry, or landscaping
2. people are interested in researching options for the outdoor area.

The facilities committee usually meets on **the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month at 6:30pm. Our next meeting will be Thursday April 8<sup>th</sup>.** If you are interested in joining you can contact Facilities Committee co-chair Kimberly Kompel at [kimberlykompel@gmail.com](mailto:kimberlykompel@gmail.com) or 651-414-0304. Feel free to join us at our next meeting to learn more. If you would like to attend, please let Kimberly know so we can inform you of any scheduling changes, should they happen.

## SCHULTUETE Newsletter

A couple of weeks ago you were sent the first issue of our new newsletter, temporarily called Schultute. We need your help to come up with a permanent name. Students, parents, teachers, and anyone else who is interested are all welcome to submit ideas. Keep in mind that the purpose of the newsletter is to keep people informed on what happens in the classrooms at TCGIS. Title suggestions can be German or English. Send your submissions to [info@tcgis.org](mailto:info@tcgis.org) by April 16.



## GAI, TCGIS and GACC Present "Education in a Global Economy: The Importance of the German-American Partnership"

**Saturday, May 15, 4–8 p.m. \$15 members and non-members**

Join us as we celebrate the remarkable German-American community in Minnesota and the important ties between our state and Germany. This milestone event is co-hosted by the Twin Cities German Immersion School, the Minnesota German-American Chamber of Commerce, and the Germanic-American Institute.

**4–5:30 p.m. Twin Cities German Immersion School:** Open house and science lab dedication

**6:30–8 p.m. Germanic-American Institute:** Hors d'oeuvre buffet and discussion with honorary guests from the fields of education, politics, and business.

RSVP by May 12 to GACC Executive Director [Nina Roelofs](mailto:Nina.Roelofs) at 651.962.4081.

Dear Families,

**Planning for next Year** Welcome back. It is always nice to hear the buzz of activity after the break. At this time of year, lots of our energy is going into setting firm foundations for our programs next year. We're doing the research and laying the ground work to make solid decisions about budget, staffing, schedule, grouping and curriculum. All of these decisions are interrelated with each other and many contain variables that aren't completely known or stable. Finance Committee and the Board continue to a wrestle with a tight budget. We're working hard to balance our financial security with our program integrity. We'll keep you updated as plans get firmed up.

**Hiring Updates** Although we're not done hiring all of our open positions for next year, we have made some progress and want to keep you updated on the staffing decisions for the classroom teachers. One structural change we have made for next year is to keep 4<sup>th</sup> grade solidly in the elementary school format with 1 homeroom, elementary certified teacher. We are very fortunate this year to maintain a lot of stability in our staff. The only brand new teacher hired so far is Carolyn Cook-Breithaupt. She is a 16 year veteran elementary teacher coming to us from Frankfurt, Germany. You will notice in studying our chart that we have done a bit of moving around internally. I am grateful to the flexibility and generosity of some of our current teachers in trying on some new grades. We are grateful to have strong candidate pools for all open positions. Extra great thanks to the teachers donating time and insight to our hiring committees. Working together to discern the best choices for our students is a challenging, though highly rewarding process.

#### **Elementary School (K – 4)**

K	Hiring committee in process	Frau Heindl
1	Frau Mettke	Frau Cooper
2	Frau Grimm	Herr Stephenson
3	Frau Kuhn	Frau Knoll
4	Frau Halvorson	Frau Cook-Breithaupt

Frau Wallace (formerly Nellis!) and Frau Stephens will continue on as English teachers.

#### **Middle School (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade)**

Frau Fritsche and Frau Stephens will continue on in stabilizing our middle school. Our middle school hiring committee is in the process of writing the job description for the staff to complement this team and review candidate for which we are grateful to have several strong candidates. We look forward to updating you at the end of our discernment process. For the meantime, we are going full speed ahead to stabilize our middle school program through staffing, schedule and curriculum. I am excited about the possibilities and look forward to walking the steps with the community to bring them into being.

We will update you on the status of our specialist programs after the next Board meeting.

**Mixing of Groups** I know another prime question for parents is whether we will be mixing up the classes they move onto the next grade. As a rule, you should NOT assume that just because a teacher is moving ahead a grade that he or she will necessarily go forward with all of the same children. Decisions about mixing and not mixing classes will be made on a case by case basis, as each team evaluates the social and academic needs of each group. We will not release class lists of precisely who is going to which classroom until late summer.

**Visit postponed.** Some of you were aware that Senator Mindy Greiling had been scheduled to visit this week. That visit has been postponed.

**Parking** Managing pick up and drop-off in our parking lot remain stressful. There is a particular challenge as to how to maintain access to the handicapped parking spots nearest the school. These are used regularly by a family from Avalon who transport a student in a wheelchair. Frequently cars are blocking access to these spots. It is difficult to keep this area free, while waiting for children, however, we ask you not to park or idle directly by the ramp so that cars can pull into those spots. We encourage you as much as you are able to park on Wheeler or University to pick up your child to reduce congestion in the lot. We realize this is difficult to manage. Do we have any traffic engineers in our parent group or anyone else with a brilliant brainstorm of facilitating pick up? Let me know.

### **Lobbying for Language Education**

If you'd like to bring your commitment to supporting foreign language education to a national level our local research group CARLA (Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition) suggests sending support for the following bills:

\* H.R.3359 U.S. and the World Education Act\* to promote international education in elementary and secondary schools and develop an international research repository through a federal competitive grant program.

\* H.R.3753 Providing Resources to Improve Dual Language Education Act to award grants to partnerships for the implementation of dual language demonstration programs designed to enhance and assess bi-literacy, bilingualism, and multicultural skills of low-income minority and LEP students from preschool through grade five.

\*\*

\*H.R.4065 Foreign Language Education Partnership Program Act\* to establish partnership programs in foreign languages and to make incentive payments to develop and maintain model programs that support articulated language learning in kindergarten through grade 12.

We encourage you to get in touch with your legislators in support of these bills. Every letter, email, or phone call counts. You can find more information about these bills and look up your legislator's contact information at <http://www.house.gov> <<http://www.house.gov>> and <http://www.senate.gov> <<http://www.senate.gov>>. If you would like, you can use the following statement."International and foreign language education is critical to America's economy, security, and quality of life. Global competency and 21st century communication skills should be an essential component of all levels of our schools. It must start early, be available to all students, include a wide variety of languages, and be fully funded. As a legislator, I urge you to support these bills and to consider becoming a co-sponsor."

Thank-you for your support of foreign language education and if you have questions or need help contacting your legislators, feel free to contact [advocacy@flavaweb.org](mailto:advocacy@flavaweb.org).

Thanks for all you do to support our school!

Annika Fjelstad  
Director  
[afjelstad@germanschool-mn.org](mailto:afjelstad@germanschool-mn.org)

# March Board Meeting Summary

The monthly board meeting was held on Wednesday March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

## **Financial Oversight**

The Finance Committee presented a draft budget to the Board for an initial review. This budget was designed to present the Board with potential scenarios for feedback to use when putting together the first full proposal in April. The budget scenario built in a 5% cut in State aid (about \$60,000) to account for the fact that future funding is uncertain and cuts to K-12 financing are likely. The proposed addition of Q-comp, a state-funded initiative aimed at improving teaching quality and accountability (approx. \$54,000) was also included in the budget. In order to balance the budget, the proposal included the following changes to specialist education: Art and Sport would each be covered by a 50% FTE (full-time equivalent) position, and Music would not be offered within the regular curriculum. The Amity Intern program remained intact, with the newly negotiated reduced rate for the interns. The proposed budget also included a reduction in the lease that has not been approved by the landlord. The Board recommended that the Finance Committee remove the lease reduction from the budget and the additional revenue from Q-Comp, as they are too uncertain to be included at this point. The Board asked that alternatives to specialist reduction be found, if possible.

The Board was informed that GIEF (German Immersion Education Foundation) has indicated that they will be dissolving and will be accepting grant applications from the organizations they support for their remaining funds. GIEF supports Kinderstube, Kinderclub, and TCGIS. The Board recommended that an application be submitted requesting funds to partially support the Amity Intern program and for two desktop computers for all classrooms for third grade and higher.

## **Strategic Planning**

### ***TCGIS Bylaw Revisions***

The Governance Committee presented revised bylaws to the Board for approval. Some of the bylaw changes were required by the new charter school law passed last year by the Minnesota State Legislature. The committee also proposed changes in order to add flexibility in how the annual board elections are held, allowing the board to annually decide to either hold the election as part of an annual meeting (as has been done in the past) or having an election day. Additional changes were proposed that merely updated the bylaws to reflect current practice and several wording changes were proposed for added clarity and brevity. In addition, term limits were added for officers of the board. The Board unanimously approved the bylaw revisions and a new board election policy that outlines the election day process.

### ***Hiring Policy***

Based on guidance given by the Board at its February meeting, the Governance Committee presented a hiring policy for the Board's approval. The policy allows the full board or the executive committee to approve hires that meet the standards approved by the Board at the beginning of the hiring process. The policy was approved unanimously by the Board.

The Board also approved the hiring of one full time 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher for next year.

### **Academic Oversight**

#### ***2010-2011 School Calendar***

The Board unanimously approved the 2010-2011 School calendar.

#### ***Middle School Curriculum***

The Board reviewed a draft of a detailed curriculum plan for the middle school program. The draft was presented by Mary-Fred Bausman-Watkins and Katie Stephens. They indicated that they used the middle school program document previously approved by the Board as the basis and then created a detailed curriculum plan that would guide implementation of the goals set in the first documents. The Board approved of the detailed document but felt that the guiding document should be updated to reflect actual practice. Both documents will be brought back to the Board for its approval at a future meeting.

### **Director Evaluation**

The Board held a closed session where it discussed the results of the director evaluation surveys. The Chair of the Board will discuss agreed upon discussion points with the Director.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Kimberly Kompel, the Parent Liaison for the Board at [kimberlykompel@gmail.com](mailto:kimberlykompel@gmail.com) or 651-414-0304.

**Don't forget the Board is looking for nominations of people willing to run for election to the Board. If you, or someone you know, are interested please contact Kimberly Kompel.**

# Twin Cities German Immersion School

## 2010-2011 School Calendar Draft

August 2010						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

September 2010						
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26	27	28	29	30		

October 2010						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

November 2010						
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28	29	30				

December 2010						
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26	27	28	29	30	31	

January 2011						
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

February 2011						
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27	28					

March 2011						
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27	28	29	30	31		

April 2011						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

May 2011						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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29	30	31				

June 2011						
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26	27	28	29	30		

July 2011						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

- School Closed
- Early Release Day
- Teacher Curriculum Day / Reporting Day (NO SCHOOL for students)
- Parent Teacher Conferences : Thursday Evening and Friday all day (NO SCHOOL)
- First and Last Day of School
- Open House
- End of First Semester

173 School Days

## Special Education Advisory Committee

Dear Parents and Teachers,

In Minnesota each charter school is considered to be an independent school district. Since charter schools are considered to be public schools they must provide special education services to eligible students. Each charter school is also required to have a special education advisory committee as part of guiding special education services.

The purpose of the committee is to have a forum to address the general needs and delivery of special education services at TCGIS. The committee is made up of special education staff, general education teachers, and for parents of special education students, as well as parents of regular education students. **This team is NOT a forum for concerns regarding specific special education students nor for complaints regarding specific special education teachers/assistants.** The special education advisory committee reports to the Board of Directors. One meeting per year is mandated, but the committee can decide to meet on a more frequent basis.

Examples of topics/goals are:

- Support, advocate, advise on special education matters (in general)
- Provide input into the decision making process of the special education department
- Support the development of a special education manual for TCGIS (required by law)
- Support teachers at our school, especially those who come from different school systems/countries, who may not be familiar with the mainstreaming/integrated school system
- To develop or help fund materials that support the German language learning for students with special needs, since special ed. financial resources do not support a German immersion education.

The first meeting of the Special Education Advisory Committee this school year is planned for **Monday, April 12 at 6 pm**. We strongly encourage parents and teachers to participate in this forum. Please let us know in advance, if you are planning to come! A reminder will be sent out shortly before the meeting.

Anne-Kathrin Kile, Special Education Teacher 651-492-7106 ex. 113 or  
akile@germanschool-mn.org

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Grand Marais Getaway	No School - Spring break					
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting		2:30pm - Early Release			
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No School - Spring break		New After-School Activities	New Choir Session begins	6:30pm - Facilities Committee		
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting	6:30pm - PTO meeting	2:30pm - Early Release			
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting 6pm - SpEd Advisory	6:30pm - Finance Committee	2:30pm - Early Release	6pm - Board Governance	School Board Nominations	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting	MCA 3rd/4th/5th Reading		Earth Day	4th & 5th Grade Field Trip to	
			2:30pm - Early Release	Officer Friendly Visit 9:00am	8am - Kaffeeklatsch	
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting	MCA 3rd/4th/5th Math				
		6:30pm - Board meeting @	2:30pm - Early Release			

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25	26	27	28	29	30	1
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting	MCA 3rd/4th/5th Math 6:30pm - Board meeting @	2:30pm - Early Release			
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting 4:30pm - MAIN 6:30pm - PTO meeting		2:30pm - Early Release			Cancelled: PTO - Tanz in den
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting	MCA Science 6:30pm - Finance Committee	2:30pm - Early Release	6:30pm - Facilities Committee		Education in a Global
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting		2:30pm - Early Release	Annual Meeting/Board 6pm - Board Governance		
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting	6:30pm - Board meeting @	2:30pm - Early Release		8am - Kaffeeklatsch	
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
	No School - Memorial Day 3:45pm - Staff Meeting		2:30pm - Early Release	4th & 5th Grade Field Trip to		