



March 3, 2010

Contents and Attachments:

Reminders and Announcements, Letter from the Director, 2010-2011 Calendar Draft, Board Meeting Summary, Invite May 15th Event, SpEd Education Advisory Comm., GAI Invite – Neuss Chamber Orchestra, Calendar March & April

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

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

- **2010-2011 School Calendar Draft**
Attached is the proposed 2010-2011 school calendar subject to final approval at the March 23rd Board Meeting. For details about the calendar, please see the letter from the director. Please direct questions / comments to Annika Fjelstad afjelstad@germanschool-mn.org.
- **Lunch Reimbursement on Class Field Trip Days**
If you have paid for lunch in advance and your child is going on a field trip during lunch hour, you can write on next month's menu that you have a credit of \$3.25. Please state on the form the date of the field trip and reduce your payment by that amount for the next month.
- **NO SCHOOL – March 12 – Teacher Grading Day**
Deadline to sign up for Kinderclub Childcare is Friday, March 5th: To enroll, please follow the link: <http://doodle.com/zeizi84dkyem8y6a>
- **Cash for Inkjet Cartridges**
Thanks to everyone who dropped off their used inkjets cartridges last fall in the green cardboard box at the front office. Empties for Cash, the inkjet recycling company, sent the school a check for \$32.45! To purchase their refurbished cartridges, visit inksmile.com.
- **Reminder: Sign up for Parent-Teacher Spring Conferences**
<http://www.virtualparagon.com/tcgis/conference/>
- **REMINDER: CHARTER SCHOOL DAY AT THE CAPITOL – MARCH 9TH**
The Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS) is organizing a charter school lobby day at the capitol on **March 9, 2010.**

March 3rd, 2010

Dear Families,

Thank you for the many, many ways that parents support the school. A particular thanks for the amazing Maskenball organizing committee and all the generosity, goodwill and fun that you released within the community. Not only did you exceed your goals financially for both the PTO and the school, you created a phenomenal point of connection that brought the school community together. We as a school are ever grateful for the long days and evenings that you spent organizing for this event.

Calendar The 2010-2011 draft school year calendar is attached. It largely follows the 2009-2010 school calendar. Differences include the formal schedule of parent-teacher communication. We've separated the report cards from parent teacher conferences in order to increase the amounts of times you get feedback from teachers. Conferences are scheduled earlier for several reasons: 1) Parents and teachers both will have the opportunity to share insights, concerns and goals while there is more chance to adapt how we work with students before they are formally evaluated. Although this calendar is unlikely to reflect major changes, we are still open to feedback before it is brought to the board for final approval. This calendar reflects when there will be no school. We will send you updated versions later that incorporate more detail about particular events that will happen throughout the school year.

PTO It was a pleasure to visit the PTO last night and engage in lively conversation with parents about what kind of feedback we seek about our children. and how to balance communication tools that way that are meaningful to parents and manageable for teachers. Unfortunately, it is too rare in busyness of discussing logistics to find the time and opportunity to talk deeply about the real substance of what we do as a parent-school team to team together to educate our children.

Site Administrative Manager The difficulty in focusing on curriculum and assessment itself is an excellent segue. I am most grateful to the board for their recent approval of hiring additional administrative support to assist in the running in the office and business side of our school and allow me a focus I crave for to be fully present to instructional leadership. The job description is posted on our website. If you know people who may be interested please refer them to us.

Supply Fee Thanks to the many of you who have promptly paid the \$50 fee the school recently charged for supplies. I know this was a stretch for many. It is a sign of the balance and the generosity in this community that the donations for scholarship, closely matched the requests for them. Thanks to those who have reached out to support those in our community not currently in a place to pay this themselves. If you have not paid, yet please make sure to fill out the slip at the front desk indicating whether you can pay in full, pay in installments, request scholarship or donate to the scholarship fund.

I apologize I did not had attach the outline for the State of the School speech as promised last letter. It is attached today. Although it lacks detail it does give an overview of strengths and challenges.

March 9th Charter School Day at the Capitol. Thanks to those who will be present on Tuesday. Although MACS registration has closed it is not too late to come along. A number of parents and I will be present and we invite you to join us as you are able. The budget scene for schools is not a pretty one, and our representative at the Charter School Association cautions us that it will be a miracle if K-12 education escapes unscathed, despite political promises. The holdback seriously threatens the integrity of our programs. It is vital to let your legislators know the value charter schools hold to you and that you are watching their stance on supporting public education.

State of the School: Twin Cities German Immersion School, February 4th, 2010

Introduction: Kim Kompel, Parent Liason to the Board
 State of the School, Annika Fjelstad, Director with assistance!

Foundation Strengths <i>Where we come from</i>	2009-2010 Benchmarks <i>Where we are</i>	Future Goals <i>Where we're going</i>
Broad Base of Parent/Community Support	PTO (Leslie Watson, PTO President) Board	!!!!!!
Relative Financial Stability	Treasurer's Report (Debra Haessley, Board Treasurer)	Maintaining our Core Values in challenging economic environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Resourcefulness ● Alternative Funding Sources
Classroom Teachers	Teachers Report (Susanne Grimm, Teacher, Board member) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implementation of Technology ● Science Curriculum ● Increased Special Ed ● Extended Kindergarten ● Assessment Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff Retention ● Alignment of Curriculum ● Differentiation ● Assessments
Proven Success/Solid Reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2010-2011 Enrollment ● MCA scores 	
Mission/Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● small class size ● Amity aides ● School Values/culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lunch Program ● Responsive Classroom ● Conflict Resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Responsive Classroom ● Conflict Resolution ● Greening of School ● Strategic Planning (Keith Lindgren for Graduate Volunteer Consultants team)
Physical Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2nd Floor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Outdoor Space ● The Future? (Kim Kompel, Facilities Committee)

Questions and Answers

Special Thanks to the PTO for assistance with childcare, set up and hospitality!

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
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29	30	31				

September 2010						
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October 2010						
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31						

November 2010						
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December 2010						
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January 2011						
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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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May 2011						
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29	30	31				

June 2011						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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26	27	28	29	30		

July 2011						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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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

January Board Meeting Summary

The monthly board meeting was held on February 23rd 2010.

Financial Oversight

The Finance Committee prepared a spreadsheet detailing the estimated cost implications of the various budgeting ideas generated by the Board at its January 26th meeting. The Board discussed the various items with the goal of providing the Finance Committee feedback on the Board's views on each, and some rough idea of priority. The Finance Committee will then use this guidance to develop two different budget scenarios. At this point the school is waiting, along with all other schools, to hear what the FY2011 budget will be, and whether many changes will be necessary to balance the budget.

The ideas that were generally agreed to as having the least negative impact to what the school community values were combining English sections, slightly raising class size limits, reducing specialist hours, reorganizing teaching positions in middle school, accepting a negotiated lower cost for the Amity interns with the associated stipulation that the school would have a minimum of 20 interns, restructuring the administrative staffing positions, and implementing a state-funded initiative called Q-comp, which is aimed at improving teaching quality and accountability.

The ideas that were generally thought to be least acceptable were cutting the Amity program, delaying implementation of the third language, combining classes (with the exception of English sections), not expanding the administrative staffing, not having a 6th grade, and cutting all specialists.

Due to the fact that enrollment decisions need to be made this month, the Board approved raising the class size limit in kindergarten and first grade from 22 to 24 students provided that each class has a dedicated intern. No change was made to the class size limits in other grades.

The Board also approved a resolution allowing the school to apply for a \$150,000 Line of Credit to help cover cash flow needs between now and the end of October 2010.

Strategic Planning

The Board approved a new administrative position (Site Administration Manager) which will be advertised immediately. The Board also discussed a proposed hiring policy that will be brought back to the next Board meeting. The results of the High School Survey were presented to the Board and generally indicated that there is strong community interest in pursuing the high school concept described in the survey. The High School Research Task Force, in partnership with others, is actively pursuing the next step of getting funding to continue the research and planning.

Academic Oversight

The Board approved the survey that will be used in the mid-year evaluation of the Director. The Director provided the Board with a first look at the 2010/2011 school calendar. No significant changes are being proposed from this year's calendar. The calendar will be available for parents to review and then will be brought back to the March board meeting for approval. The Director also presented a proposed 2010/2011 staffing plan. The Board approved the hiring of two full time teaching positions for 4th grade and the equivalent of two full time teaching positions for 5th and 6th grade.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Kimberly Kompel, the Parent Liaison for the Board at 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.**



Mark your calendar for a milestone event co-hosted by the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS), the Minnesota German-American Chamber of Commerce (GACC) and the Germanic-American Institute (GAI).

***Education in a Global Economy:
The Importance of the German-American Partnership***

Twin Cities German Immersion School (4:00 – 5:30 pm)

Open House
Science Lab Dedication

Germanic-American Institute (6:30 – 8:00 pm)

Hors d'oeuvre
Highlighting the Mission of GAI and GACC
Invited Guests from Education, Politics and Business - Remarks and Discussion

Saturday May 15, 2010

Please join us for this first-ever event to celebrate the remarkable German-American community in Minnesota and the important ties between our state and Germany.

For more information, contact:

Juergen Konczak (TCGIS) – jkonczak@umn.edu

Nina Roelofs (GACC) - roel6790@stthomas.edu

Jeana Smith (GAI) – jsmith@gai-mn.org

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

GAI EVENT

Ein Abend voller Musik - **Make your Reservations Now!!**

TCGIS Strings Ensemble, the Neuss Kammerorchester (Chamber Orchestra) and the Rose Ensemble performing at the GAI

Saturday, March 13

Social hour at 6:00 p.m.; Performances 7:00-8:30 p.m.

\$7/ adults \$5/child; \$20/family

Childcare available on-site in the carriage house from 6:30-9:00 p.m.

This special event is not to be missed! The GAI is excited to welcome the Neuss Chamber Orchestra from our German sister city for an evening of live music, socializing, and international camaraderie. Also performing will be the talented TCGIS String Ensemble and the renowned Rose Ensemble. Guests will be able to mingle throughout the Haus while listening to music and enjoying drinks, desserts and light hors d'oeuvres.

Following the performances, guests will have the opportunity to meet and socialize with the musicians. Ticket price includes admission and food; cash bar open in the Ratskeller. Childcare is complimentary with a suggested donation of \$5.00 per child/ \$10 per family.

Please RSVP by Wednesday, March 13th online or call the GAI office.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	1 3:30pm - Fundraiser in 3:45pm - Staff Meeting 6:30pm - PTO meeting	2	3 2:30pm - Early Release	4	5	6
7	8 3:45pm - Staff Meeting	9 6:30pm - Finance Committee	10 2:30pm - Early Release	11 6:30pm - Facilities Committee	12 No School - Teacher Grading	13
14	15 TCGIS Clothing/Merchandise Sale 3:45pm - Staff Meeting 6pm - Board Governance	16	17 2:30pm - Early Release	18	19 Game Night PTO	20
21	22 3:45pm - Staff Meeting	23 Honorary Consul Heino 6:30pm - Board meeting @	24 2:30pm - Early Release	25 Parent Teacher Evening	26 Grand Marais Getaway Fundraiser Trip NO SCHOOL - Parent Teacher 8am - Kaffeeklatsch	27
28 Grand Marais Getaway	29 No School - Spring break 3:45pm - Staff Meeting	30	31 2:30pm - Early Release	1	2	3

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			2:30pm - Early Release	6:30pm - Facilities Committee		
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting 6:30pm - PTO meeting					
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		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	3:45pm - Staff Meeting	MCA 3rd/4th/5th Reading			4th & 5th Grade Field Trip to	
			2:30pm - Early Release		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			