



September 3, 2009

Contents and Attachments:

Letter from the Director, 4th Grade Overnight Field Trip, Library Announcement, Dismissal Procedure, School Picnic Flyer, School Calendar 2009-2010

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **NO SCHOOL Friday, Sept. 4th through Monday, Sept. 7th.**
- **Back to School Picnic – Sept. 17, 2009 - Newell Park – 4:30 to 6:30**
Our picnic will take place rain or shine. We have rented the pavilion (building) at Newell Park and shelters will be available in case it rains. See attached flyer for more details.
- **TCGIS Calendar**
Please see attached TCGIS calendar, which can also be found in your family handbook you received this week. We will be introducing a new format for both the website www.germanschool-mn.org and the Elternbrief, so please use the yearly calendar as reference for the time being. We will keep sending you updates on any newly scheduled events.
- **Mark you calendars:**
Curriculum Night for Parents – Sept. 24th from 5-6 pm and Meet the Board event. More info coming soon!

Dear Families,

Willkommen! Welcome to a new year at Twin Cities German Immersion School. It was exciting to see the eager faces pouring through our doors on Monday morning. The beginning of the school year always brings with it a mixture of both excitement and anxiety about the unknown. For those new to German Immersion and those freshly returning to German after a summer of English, the first day of school can be exhausting and overwhelming. You will support your child by not over scheduling him or her. Allow space for rest and relaxation afterschool. Listen to concerns from your child and share, affirm his or her experience and reassure him that he or she will be OK and will learn German. The teachers will ensure that students understand the most important messages.

Communication with school As you leave your children behind at the door I know you are anxious to know as much as possible about what is happening in their worlds. To that end I want to let you know what communication channels are available to you.

Elternbrief Every Wednesday you will receive via e-mail an update from the school as a whole. It will let you know of upcoming events and include any forms that need to be filled out.

Classroom Letters You will receive updates from your child's teacher every two weeks about events occurring specifically in your classroom. Teacher letters this year will be received directly from the teacher of your child's classroom. They will not be incorporated into the Elternbrief for the whole school.

Talking with Teachers If you have a concern or question about something happening in your child's classroom, please communicate directly with the teacher. E-mail is the most efficient mode to get a message to a teacher. Please do not check in quickly with your child's teacher at the beginning of the school day. Teachers need to be focused on the needs of students at this time. In addition, it is important that the classroom space not have English conversations between adults occurring in them. You will receive a handbook today that lists contact information for each child. Please check your child's handbook for yours.

Director Access I will be at the door greeting students and parents each morning. I am looking forward to putting a face with each name and getting to know you and your family. I am interested in knowing your concerns and insights. I would urge you to go first to your child's teacher about concerns regarding an individual child. If you continue to need additional support, please let me know.

Teacher Updates I notified parents in the 3rd grade yesterday, that there has been a complication for the teacher we have hired to be in 3a. We are grateful to substitute teacher Frau Matthews and Amity intern Frau Jankowski who are so ably kicking off the year. We are interviewing additional teacher candidates, in case it is verified that Frau Fliegner is unable to come. I feel very fortunate that we have several viable alternatives and am confident that we will have a long-term plan for 3a in place very soon. I will update you as soon as I have news.

Building Updates As you know it has been a bit of a scramble to get our newly built second floor up and running in time for classes and we generally have with a few exceptions. Both music and 4th grade English will temporarily take place in an extra classroom on the 2nd floor, until the music room is ready for use. It is unfortunate that the bathrooms on the 2nd floor are not yet ready for use. There was a delay in permitting which continues to affect the timeline. Steady progress is being made and we hope to have them usable by the end of the week. Until that time 4th and 5th grade students will be using the

bathrooms on the 1st floor. Thanks for patience and flexibility of all as we cope with less than ideal circumstances.

Lunch Schedule Because we currently serve 197 students we can no longer do this in only two shifts. We are using a staggered schedule to get everybody through both lunch and recess between 10:55 and 12:15. A special appreciation to teachers who are putting in extra time this week to help classes firmly establish their routines around coming and going to lunch and recess.

Dismissal

Early Dismissal Please remember that each Wednesday we end at 2:30 instead of 3:15. If you are not able to do pick up at 2:30, you may enroll your child in Kinderclub by contacting Gwendolyn Stangel at gstangel@gai-mn.org. This time is used by your grade level teams to plan curriculum together. Thank you for your flexibility in helping the staff have some additional time to plan the best program possible for your child.

5th grade initiates our middle school program which means there are some slight differences from the elementary school schedule. Students are scheduled 15 minutes longer at the end of the day. If you are picking up a 5th grader please aim to come between 3:30 and 3:40 for pick-up. They will not be ready with the rest of the children at 3:15.

I am grateful for all the support and welcome I have thus far received. I look forward to getting to know you and nurturing the school we will build together.

Annika Fjelstad

Director

afjelstad@germanschool-mn.org

4th GRADE OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIP

Mark your calendars! The 4th grade students are scheduled to visit the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center in Fergus Falls Sept. 16th – 18th. The focus of the three day/two night trip is to provide students with exploratory learning opportunities in a variety of environmental subjects. Learning Center staff will lead students through hands-on lessons that are engaging and tie into multidisciplinary studies. Students are scheduled to leave school at 7:30 AM on the 17th and return at 4:30 PM on the 19th. The trip includes instruction, all meals and the two night stay. Students will be transported to and from Fergus Falls via chartered bus. Permission slips, trip details and payment information will be sent out separately.

Bücherei! (Library!)

The library at TCGIS is unique--not only do we have one of the largest collections of children's German books in the US, but we are also completely volunteer-run. We are currently looking for volunteers to help with operations of the library. Tasks include being a classroom visit volunteer (help with the processing and finding of books for children during classroom visits--usually half an hour once per week), shelving, cataloging, repairing, and purchasing. You need not do all--pick a task or two! Classroom visit volunteers have more of a commitment, since we schedule the personell weeks in advance. But those of you who can

help with other tasks can be more flexible. This opportunity does not require that you speak German. And it's a fun opportunity to get involved with all the children here at TCGIS. Please contact Holly Wiste at library@germanschool-mn.org or call the school and leave a message on the library voicemail and she will get back to you. Training, of course, will be provided! We look forward to hearing from you all--especially you new families!

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

We are working on making the dismissal process safer and more efficient. Here is how parents can help:

- Parents who pick up from their car: please put your child's name sign in your car window and stay in your car until your child is dismissed from the teacher.
- Parents who wait outside the front door: Please form a line going from the front door towards University Avenue for better visibility. Please remind your child that she/he needs to line up with the class first and wait to be dismissed from the teacher.
- ALL PARENTS: It is not permitted to let your children play on the handicap ramp at any time. It is not safe for the kids and it needs to be accessible for people who need it. One of our rules during recess is that students are not allowed to climb or play in that particular area, so please remind your child at dismissal.

TCGIS Back-to-School Picnic

September 17 - 4:30 to 6:30pm Newell Park

Join us for the first family event of the school year! Our Back to School Picnic will be held from **4:30 pm to 6:30 pm on Thursday, September 17th**. We'll gather at the north end of **Newell Park** located at 900 N Fairview Ave in St. Paul. This will be a great chance to interact with teachers and staff in an informal setting and an opportunity to touch base with old and new friends. Please bring a blanket or beach chairs along with your picnic dinner and drinks. **We are asking each family to bring a dessert to share** which can be dropped off at the pavilion / main building of the park. Paper plates and plastic ware will be provided, but please feel free to bring your own re-usable items - GO GREEN!



Don't forget to bring cash - Jamba Juice will be selling fruit smoothies again for only \$2 each!

If you'd like, bring your jump ropes, frisbees and soccer balls!



Volunteers needed!

Please contact Stefanie at 651-492-7106 or sberres@germanschool-mn.org if you're interested in helping with set-up and clean-up.

----- Please detach and return this portion to school by September 11 -----

Name of Student(s) : _____ Grade(s) _____

Our family is planning on coming to the event Yes No

of Jamba Juice smoothies you plan to buy _____ (\$2 ea).
(Do not send money - purchase at the event)

Twin Cities German Immersion School

Events Calendar for School Year 2009-2010

School starts: 8:15 AM

School ends: 3:15 PM

AM Drop Off Time: 7:50-8:10

PM Pick Up Time: 3:15-3:30
(5th grade: 3:30-3:40)

August

- 24-28 Teacher Orientation/Staff Training
- 25 Board Meeting, 6:30-9:30 pm
- 27 Open Haus (4:30-7:00 pm)
- 31 **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL !!**

September

- 4-7 Labor Day Weekend - No School
- 17 Back-to-School Picnic Newell Park
- 24 Curriculum Night for Parents 5-6 pm
- 29 Board Meeting, 6:30-9:30 pm

October

- 12-16 TCGIS Clothing/Merchandise Sale
- 14 Curric. Development Day **NO SCHOOL**
- 15,16 State Teacher Convention **NO SCHOOL**
- 27 Board Meeting, 6:30-9:30 pm
- 30 Halloween / Fall Festival

November

- 7 PTO Auflauf Cook-Off 5:30 pm
- 8 Martinstag Event - Landmark Center
- 24 End of 1st Trimester
Board Meeting, 6:30-9:30 pm
- 25-27 Thanksgiving Break **NO SCHOOL**
- 30 Grading & Reporting Day **NO SCHOOL**

December

- 3 School Concert (Location TBD)
- 5 Nikolausabend (kids set shoes out)
- 6 Nikolaustag (Nicholas Day in Germany)
- 10 Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 11 Parent-Teacher Conferences **NO SCHOOL**
- 15 Board Meeting, 6:30 – 9:30
- 21-1/3 Winter break **NO SCHOOL**

January

- 4 School resumes
- 18 Martin Luther King Day **NO SCHOOL**
- 26 Board Meeting, 6:30-9:30 pm

Every Wednesday Early Release

Teacher Collaborative Planning Time
School Ends: 2:30 PM (all Grades)

February

- 12 Curric. Development Day **NO SCHOOL**
- 15 President's Day **NO SCHOOL**
- 20 PTO Maskenball
- 23 Board Meeting, 6:30-9:30 pm

March

- 9 End of 2nd Trimester
- 12 Grading & Reporting Day **NO SCHOOL**
- 15-19 TCGIS Clothing/Merchandise Sale
- 23 Board Meeting, 6:30-9:30 pm
- 25 Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 26 Parent-Teacher Conferences **NO SCHOOL**
- 29-4/5 Spring Break **NO SCHOOL**

April

- 3 TCGIS Rummage Sale
- 6 School resumes
- 20-21 MCA 3rd, 4th & 5th Grade – Reading
- 27 Board Meeting, 6:30-9:30 pm
- 27-28 MCA 3rd, 4th & 5th Grade – Math

May

- 8 PTO Tanz in den Mai – 1-3 pm / GAI
- 11,12 MCA 5th Grade – Science
- 20 School Concert (Location TBD)
Annual Meeting / Board Elections
- 25 Board Meeting, 6:30-9:30 pm
- 31 Memorial Day **NO SCHOOL**

June

- 11 **LAST DAY OF SCHOOL !!**
End of 3rd Trimester
- 14,15 Teacher work days (no school)
- 22 Board Meeting, 6:30-9:30 pm

TOTAL: 173 instructional days

Please note: The school calendar may be subject to minor changes