



TWIN CITIES  
**German  
Immersion**  
SCHOOL

## **Family Handbook 2024-25**

Twin Cities German Immersion School  
1031 Como Avenue  
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651-492-7106

### **Willkommen!**

The Twin Cities German Immersion School is a charter school authorized by the University of St. Thomas. This handbook is intended to serve as an informational guide for students and families. It does not encompass every situation or circumstance, but rather serves as a reference for procedures and expectations.

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# SECTION I: Mission & Philosophy

TCGIS Mission: Innovative education of the whole child through German immersion.

TCGIS Vision: Andere hören, andere sehen, weltoffen denken und handeln.

The TCGIS learning environment values:

- curiosity
- kindness
- challenge and support
- community
- intercultural engagement

## *History*

A team of dedicated stakeholders committed countless hours of time and talent to insure the gift of German language immersion for students of the greater Twin Cities. TCGIS is a tuition-free, public charter school. Its immersion program utilizes German as the language of instruction. The school opened its doors in the fall of 2005 with kindergarten and grade 1. TCGIS graduated a class of 8th graders in the spring of 2013 and the school year 2016-17 brought the graduation of those students from several metro area high schools.

## *Philosophy*

### **Multilingual**

Multilingualism is a norm in most of the world, and we desire linguistic capability for our students. We believe students who know more than one language will be better prepared for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Daily English instruction begins in grade 3 and in grades 7 & 8, our students have the opportunity to take Spanish. Students graduate from TCGIS as fluent, biliterate German speakers. In addition, they develop the transferable skills of language learning and its cognitive benefits including non-verbal problem solving and increased flexibility.

### **International**

Through German immersion we educate students for informed and active world citizenship. We give students the information, skills, tools and perspective necessary to prepare them to be aware of, connect with, listen to, understand and respect people with different experiences and worldviews. Our students learn and practice life-long skills of communication, negotiation, and conflict resolution. They will be able to interact and communicate as world citizens. Students will be prepared to take on the challenges in the global marketplace using their 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. We believe that the communicative focus in our curriculum will teach our students to be more responsible citizens of their families, their classrooms, their school, their communities and the world.

### **Goals**

TCGIS students who complete our program through 8th grade will have demonstrated their ability to use their German language skills not only to speak with friends and teachers, and to communicate with native speakers comfortably and effectively. They will also be biliterate – able to interact at an academic level in a wide array of subjects. Furthermore, their participation in our capstone exchange program will provide them with a truly international, person-to-person experience in which they experience both school and family life in Germany. They will be well equipped to enter and succeed in challenging secondary school environments, including International Baccalaureate programs, Advanced Placement classes, College in the Schools programs and Post-Secondary Educational Options.

**Supportive**

We believe students learn best when they are known and understood as individuals. Each student at our school is accepted and challenged in the manner most appropriate for her or him. In addition, knowing the families of the students we teach and working with them as partners are essential components to the success of each student.

**Challenging**

We believe students rise to academic challenges that are developmentally appropriate. We are committed to providing an academic environment that teaches and expects students to do their best work. We believe our students' success on standardized tests is reflective of the holistic environment in which they are nurtured and where arts and physical movement are valued, taught and integrated with reading, writing, math and science skills.

**Differentiation**

TCGIS staff work in professional learning communities (PLCs) using data based decision making to meet students' needs. Based on data, teachers offer enrichment and remediation within the classroom for all levels of learners. A special focus on enrichment challenges students to synthesize information and apply it to real world situations using 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

**Community Based**

We believe the most measurable cognitive growth occurs through social interaction. We also believe the social skills students need in order to be successful academically and socially must be taught. The social curriculum provides the foundation for the academic curriculum. How students learn is as important as what they learn. TCGIS recognizes students can only learn when they feel safe and accepted in a community. Our classrooms are united by an educational philosophy called Responsive Classroom, which serves as the foundation of the social skills curriculum.

**Involved**

We believe at the heart of every vibrant school is an involved community. The TCGIS school board members, administrators, faculty and families collaborate to increase student achievement. Within the scope of the mission and vision of TCGIS, we encourage families to seek out ways to collaboratively serve students. Parents are encouraged to contact the Volunteer Coordinator to get involved.

## **SECTION II: Commitments & Governance**

### ***Commitments***

TCGIS has an active partnership between the school board, school employees and families; together, all of us work towards building a strong community.

#### **School Board's Commitment**

- Demonstrate by attitude and actions genuine concern and respect for each student, family, staff, and board members.
- Oversees governance, financial management and leadership supervision based on the school's mission, vision and strategic plan.
- Ensures effective organizational planning, provides and manages resources, and monitors and strengthens the program and services at TCGIS.
- Ensures legal and ethical integrity within the school and maintains accountability.
- Creates and reviews all school policies in compliance with the Minnesota Department of Education and the school's mission and vision.

#### **Administration's Commitment**

- Demonstrate by attitude and actions genuine concern and respect for each student, family, staff, and board members.
- Create an organized, safe, and supportive learning environment for teachers, parents and students.
- Manage school affairs responsibly to ensure sustainability and continuous improvement.
- Communicate consistently and openly with teachers, parents, students, and community members.
- Abide by all school policies.

#### **Teachers' Commitment**

- Demonstrate by attitude and actions genuine concern and respect for each student, family, staff, and board members.
- Partner with parents in discussions on the academic progress and conduct of students on a regular basis.
- Plan and conduct a program of instruction that captures the interest and meets the needs of each student.
- Manage classroom routines that contribute to the immersion program and the Responsive Classroom environment.
- Teach and enforce the rules in a courteous, consistent, and fair manner, and deal with misconduct quickly, fairly and impartially.
- Abide by all school policies.

#### **Parent's Commitment**

- Demonstrate by attitude and actions genuine concern and respect for each student, family, staff, and board members.
- Make sure each child regularly arrives to school on time and is prepared to learn.
- Encourage daily effort and work for children.
- Communicate respectfully with the teacher and student about any concerns.

- Speak directly to any person with whom you have a concern. If the concern cannot be resolved directly, the parties can mutually reach out to the school administration for mediation and support, or to the school board chair if the issue concerns administration.
- Attend parent-teacher conferences.
- Whether through volunteering or financial means, support school programs.
- Abide by all school policies.

## **Student's Commitment**

- Come to school ready to learn.
- Pay attention with eyes, ears, and body.
- Speak, read and write German at school with everybody.
- Do any homework every day.
- Strive for success every day.
- Demonstrate by attitude and actions genuine concern and respect for other students and TCGIS staff.
- Follow school rules.

## **Governance**

Twin Cities German Immersion School, Independent School District 4152, is a charter school run by a Board of Directors. Board members can be teachers, parents of currently enrolled students, or community members who subscribe to the mission and vision of TCGIS. Board members meet at least once a month to discuss the agenda prepared by the Board Chair and administration. The Board's role is to set policy and initiate long term strategic planning.

All are welcome to school board meetings, though prior notification is necessary to put an item on the agenda. Board members agree to set aside personal agendas and act in good faith according to the mission of the school in making decisions. Board meeting dates, agendas and minutes are placed on the Twin Cities German Immersion School website according to statutory requirements.

## **Committees and Advisory Groups**

TCGIS encourages community involvement. There are many different committees and advisory groups that help improve the quality of all students' educational experience. Please contact the front office at [info@tcgis.org](mailto:info@tcgis.org) if you are interested in becoming involved.

## SECTION III: General Information

### *Arrival and Dismissal Information*

#### Morning Arrival

Sidewalk supervision on Van Slyke Avenue for morning arrival is provided daily between 7:50am – 8:15am. Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. must enter through the building's Main Entrance (located on the WEST side of the building by the staff parking lot) and sign in at the Front Office (see Attendance Policy for more information on tardy procedures).

#### Dismissal

Students are dismissed from school at 3:15pm. Students remaining at school after 3:30pm without adult supervision, and/or with no dismissal plan indicated in Pikmykid will be directed to the Front Office.

All elementary student dismissal plans must be managed through Pikmykid. **School staff are obligated to follow the delegation in Pikmykid when dismissing elementary school students.** If an elementary school student is registered for an after-school activity or Kinderclub, they **must** also be delegated accordingly in Pikmykid, as the registration alone is not enough to determine each day's dismissal plan.

Parents are expected to communicate with their middle school students about each day's dismissal plan. Middle school students who ride the bus will still be listed in PikMyKid but parents should **not** delegate middle school bus riders to different dismissal modes using PikMyKid.

Kindergarten and 1st graders picked up via Walking Pick-Up (on the playground) must be signed out by a parent or guardian with the TCGIS staff member(s) holding clipboards near the ping pong tables.

#### Late Pick Ups

Students are expected to be picked up at 3:15 and no later than 3:30pm (or 1:00pm on Early Release days). If, due to unforeseen circumstances, you are unable to pick your student(s) up on time, contact the Front Office (651-492-7106) as far in advance as possible.

Any student who is not picked up by 3:45pm will be sent to Kinderclub to ensure appropriate supervision. Students using Kinderclub due to late pick ups are subject to regular Kinderclub fees, and families will be billed retroactively on our online ordering system, RegPack, as needed. If you do not have a RegPack account, you will need to provide payment via cash or check at pick up.

If students are habitually picked up later than 3:30pm, the School may require families to set up a standing plan for after-school care with Kinderclub.

#### Early Release Wednesdays during 2024-25:

Early release days will occur on the following Wednesdays: Early Release Days end at 12:45pm

- Dec 11, 2024
- March 5, 2025
- May 7, 2025

See the [Board approved 2024-25 School Calendar](#) for more information.

Morning arrival is not affected by Early Release schedules.

Dismissal on Early Release days is at 12:45pm. Bus service is provided on these days. Please check the early release bus drop off times in the 2024-25 Busing Handbook listed on the TCGIS website under Family Resources. Students remaining at school after 1:00pm will be directed to the foyer and/or Front Office to wait for an authorized adult to pick them up. Please refer to the Late Pick-up Procedure for further information.

## ***Vehicle Drop-Off/Pick-Up***

### **Drop-Off/Pick-Up Locations:**

- Van Slyke Avenue: Vehicle drop off/pick up for students grades K-8
- See [Pick-Up/Drop Off Map](#) as a guide for dropping students off and picking them up in our Drop Off/Pick Up zone.

### **Safety & Courtesy Expectations:**

- Vehicles dropping students on Van Slyke should NOT circle the school to exit on Lexington. Due to traffic congestion, vehicles MUST exit on Como/Chatsworth.
- When dropping off students, remember to pull as far forward in the line of vehicles as possible and DO NOT let students exit the car until you are at the marked "Loading Zone."
- Students should enter/exit the vehicle on the side closest to the sidewalk.
- Please make sure any adult authorized to pick up your student(s) has a school-provided vehicle window tag and knows the PikMyKid student ID numbers.
- Drivers of vehicles without a school-provided window sign may be asked to report to the Front Office to show photo-id verifying they are on the student(s)' Authorized Pick Up List (see Authorized Pick Up section below).
- Adults dropping off or picking up students should NOT exit the vehicle unless absolutely necessary. Staff are available to help students into/out of the school building.
- Students should exit doors onto the sidewalk if possible.
- Avoid parking in areas that require students to cross Van Slyke during drop off and/or pick up times.
- Avoid arriving for pick up before 3:00pm; if you do arrive early, you can wait at the Historic Streetcar Station or Como Park Pavilion before coming to the school.
- Please do not idle your car while waiting for your child.
- Please do not cut in line! Be respectful and patiently wait for your turn.
- Cars are not allowed to park within 5 feet of alleyways and/or driveways, or in front of carriage walks and/or fire hydrants.
- During drop off, stay attentive! Watch closely for pedestrians and bicyclists!

## ***Walking Drop-Off/Pick-Up***

- In efforts to be a good neighbor, the school has committed to doing our best to leave at least one parking space available in front of each home in our immediate neighborhood. We also ask that drivers be mindful of not blocking street access paths. We ask that adults parking in the neighborhood to walk students to school maintain this expectation.
- Adults who wish to walk students directly to the building door may park on:
  - Oxford Street N
  - Churchill Ave
  - Jessamine Ave W
  - Lexington Ave
  - Argyle St N

- Parking lots between Como Park Pool and McMurray Fields
- Adults picking students up from school on foot can retrieve students from the following locations:
  - The Courtyard where the EAST entrance is located.
  - If you feel your student(s) may need special accommodations/assistance during drop off/pick up procedures, please contact the front office at [info@tcgis.org](mailto:info@tcgis.org).

## ***Authorized Pick-Ups***

Should you wish to have any other private party other than custodial guardians/parents (classmate's parent, grandparent, etc.) pick up your students, authorization for pick up must be delegated through the PikMyKid app or via email communication with the front office.

USING A COMMERCIAL THIRD PARTY SUCH AS A TAXI OR UBER TO PICK A CHILD UP MAY ONLY HAPPEN WITH PRIOR NOTIFICATION. TEACHER SUPERVISORS WILL NOT RELEASE CHILDREN TO COMMERCIAL THIRD PARTIES WITHOUT CONFIRMATION FROM THE OFFICE PRIOR TO DISMISSAL. TCGIS IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY PAYMENTS LOST DUE TO FAILURE TO INFORM THE SCHOOL IN A TIMELY MANNER.

## ***Student Release***

The school, unless informed otherwise, presumes that custodial and non-custodial parents are authorized to pick up a student from school. It is not the role of the school to enforce custody agreements. The enforcement of court orders is the responsibility of parents. If restrictions are made relative to the drop off or pick up of a student, the custodial parent will be requested to submit a certified copy of the court order, which curtails this right.

The school cannot legally limit access to a parent if there is no copy of a court order on file at the school. Any subsequent changes to a court order will need to be acknowledged by both parents. If there is a restraining order, a certified copy must be on file with the school office. The school cannot legally keep either parent from picking up her or his student from school without having a certified copy of the restraining order from the courts. The school will not be held liable for enforcement of such orders, but will do its best in following any court order. Only a parent or legal guardian may designate another adult (over the age of 18) to pick up a student from school. Such authorization must be presented in writing and entered into the school's emergency contact database. Persons authorized by the parent or legal guardian for pickup must be able to produce a valid, unexpired, photo identification card upon request. Please refer to the following website if you have any questions. <http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/Attorney/FTIPOverview.htm>

## ***School Closing and Inclement Weather***

In cases of weather emergencies, it falls to TCGIS administration to make decisions regarding school closings, late starts, and/or early dismissals. The administration may decide to close school early during inclement weather. School closings and late starts will be communicated through our school wide messaging service Infinite Campus. Texts will be sent out prior to 6am whenever possible.

An alert via text message, email, and/or automated phone call will be sent via Infinite Campus to inform families and employees of a school closing or late start according to school policy. Please ensure that you update your communication preferences in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Please note that we cannot send you text messages without your consent and you must check that preference in the Infinite Campus Portal. It is the responsibility of families and staff to access media outlets for up to date information. TCGIS is not responsible for media outlet failure to communicate messages.

## ***Busing***

TCGIS offers busing for students to and from school. We cannot guarantee busing for all students as we only have 4 buses. We partner with Collaborative Student Transportation Services. For full busing information, please review the [2024-2025 Busing Handbook](#) (also linked on the [school website](#)).

We also provide ZuVon, a carpooling system for families who are interested in coordinating transportation with other TCGIS families. TCGIS facilitates this option but does not manage the pairing of families. You can find more information on the [ZuVon](#) website.

## ***Attendance***

Minnesota state law requires students from age 7 to be in school except in cases of legally excused absences. See below for attendance procedures and the difference between excused and unexcused absences/tardies. Additional information can also be found in TCGIS's [Attendance Policy](#).

TCGIS knows that good school attendance is essential for students to have the opportunity to have the full learning experience and German language immersion and practice that cannot be made up or replicated at home. Educational time spent in class and interaction with teachers and other students in German is essential to maintaining good progress in all subject areas.

## ***Attendance Procedures***

Daily attendance records are part of each student's permanent record and are to be taken seriously. It is the responsibility of each parent/guardian to ensure their child attends school and to inform TCGIS in the event of an absence. Assignments will be given to the student upon their return. The student will have as many days as they were gone to turn in the completed work, with a week being the maximum time given.

## ***On-Site Daily Attendance Procedures***

TCGIS arrival time is between 7:50-8:10 AM. This is the time for students to find their way to the locker, get their school material ready and get to class. The school day at TCGIS begins promptly at 8:15 AM. Students are expected to be ready for class and in their classroom by 8:15 AM each morning.

- Attendance is taken twice a day in Elementary School (AM/PM) and each period in Middle School, with the first attendance being taken at 8:15 AM.
- Parents/students arriving after 8:10 AM must enter through the main entrance (door 1 by the parking lot). Students arriving after 8:15 AM are considered tardy. **Please note: we strongly recommend students arrive at school before 8:15 AM to allow time for students to get to class. Students do best when they have time to settle in, put their things away and get to class on time.**
  - Students in KG-4th grade who are tardy must be signed in by a parent.
  - Students in 5th-8th grade who are tardy may sign themselves in or be signed in by a parent.
- Buses are scheduled to arrive at school by 8:10 AM. If a bus arrives after 8:15 AM, the students arriving on the late bus must go to the Front Office to be checked in before going to class. Students will be marked as excused.
- The Front Office enters attendance records into Infinite Campus between 9:30-10:30 AM.
- The Front Office updates attendance records throughout the day according to Infinite Campus attendance reports, phone calls, emails, written notes, and students signed in and out.

## Reporting an Absence

Parents/guardians need to notify TCGIS every day that their child will be late or absent. To ensure accurate attendance records, parents are asked to report absences by 9:00 AM on the day of the absence.

For convenience, TCGIS offers two options for reporting absences:

1. Email – please send an email to [info@tcgis.org](mailto:info@tcgis.org)
2. Telephone Attendance Line – please call 651-492-7106

When reporting an absence or tardy, parents/guardians must include the following information so the Front Office can enter their child's attendance records accurately and excuse absences accordingly:

- Student's Full Legal Name
- Grade/Class (1A, 4C, etc)
- Date(s) of absence or tardy
- Reason for the absence or tardy (if ill, please include symptoms so the health office can be aware of trends)
- Parent/Guardian Name

## Excused Absences

TCGIS can make the decision to excuse an absence according to the guidelines approved by Minnesota State Attendance Law. These legally excused absences include illness, medical appointments, religious holidays, and family emergencies.

In addition, TCGIS will allow a total of 5 excused "Family Day" absences per year for pre-approved family functions, events, vacations, etc. See the [Attendance Policy](#) for a complete list of excused absences as well as rules for communicating Family Day absences.

Routine absences (including routine early dismissals) due to non-school related events, activities, and obligations, such as sports, performances, modeling, acting, music, Scouts, etc., may also be pre-approved and excused at the discretion of the TCGIS administration.

## Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence or tardy is one for which TCGIS has not received a valid excuse for the absence or tardy (as outlined above in the Excused Absences section). All absences will be considered unexcused until a parent or guardian informs the school of an excused reason for absence. While the following reasons for which absences are reported might be true, they are not considered excused under MN law:

- Running late – such as forgetting something at home or having a conflict with parent work schedules
- Personal transportation issues – such as missing the bus, personal vehicle malfunctioning, bad weather, road closures, etc. Some travel issues may be excused at the discretion of administration, but are not guaranteed.
- Oversleeping – including sleeping in to catch up on rest after a late evening the night before.
- Staying home to babysit or help a parent/guardian with something
- Refusing to come to school
- Absences due to family activities/travel that are not pre-approved or that exceed the 5 family days permitted per school year

In the event of a consistent conflict that results in tardiness, we recommend parents take advantage of Kinderclub or make alternative arrangements to ensure students arrive on time.

## **Tardiness**

TCGIS values regular attendance and punctuality. Students are considered tardy if they are late to class or if they arrive at their homeroom after 8:15 am. Being more than 15 minutes late to a class period will be considered an absence for an hour in middle school. Being more than one hour late to school in elementary school will be considered a half-day absence. Our student support groups will explore the reasons for these tardies in elementary and middle school and provide necessary interventions and support.

## **Consequences for Unexcused Absences & Tardies**

Unexcused absences will be monitored by the Attendance Coordinator, the social worker, the academic administration, and the Executive Director. After 3 accumulated unexcused absences, the student's parent or guardian will be notified by mail and/or email. A referral to the school social worker to work on developing a plan to support attendance may follow and a conference with administration may be required. TCGIS, the parents, and the community are all partners in school attendance and educational success. Further information regarding attendance monitoring can be found in the [Attendance Policy](#).

Unexcused tardies will also be monitored by TCGIS. Our attendance team will provide support and guidance in collaboration with the student's home county.

## ***At School***

### **Intern Program**

Typically, every grade level and many specialists have the benefit of a native German speaking assistant. We recruit German-speaking interns who work together with the classroom teachers. Our interns will generally be young adults who are studying pedagogy or have just completed their studies and are looking for practical classroom experience. They are hosted by school families or friends of TCGIS. All school families are welcome and encouraged to invite our interns over for a family dinner or celebration, out for an excursion, or to introduce them to other young people in the area. Our interns are only here for five months to a year and we hope to give them a well-rounded introduction to Minnesota and our way of life. For more information about hosting, please contact a TCGIS Intern Coordinator.

### **Classroom Hours**

The instructional day is from 8:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. There is a 55-minute period each day for recess and lunch. A daily morning and afternoon break will be scheduled at the teacher's discretion.

### **Office Hours**

The school office will be open every school day from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

### **Food Service**

TCGIS is committed to improving and maintaining the health of our school community by offering a nutritious lunch to all students and staff members. All meals are provided by our caterer Done Right Food Services, Inc. Their well-balanced meals always include fresh fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, and whole grains.

We are continuing to participate in the Free School Meals program that went into effect in SY23/24. This program provides MN state reimbursement for a free breakfast and lunch to students who receive meals through their school's participation in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP).

The 24/25 TCGIS Lunch and Breakfast Meal Program offers following meal options (please note, all meals include a carton of milk):

- Regular Meal: \$0.00
- Vegetarian Meal: \$0.00
- Cold Sandwich Meal: \$0.00
- Gluten Free Meal\*: \$0.00
- Breakfast: \$0.00
- Adult/Staff Meal: \$5.40
- Forgotten Lunch: \$0.00
- Extra helpings of the main entrée are available for \$2.25
- Extra milk (skim, 1%) can be purchased for \$0.65

\*Please note: GF meals are only available to students with medically required dietary restrictions. Please fill out the [Special Diet Statement](#) form (physician's signature required) and return it to [aweeding@tcgis.org](mailto:aweeding@tcgis.org)

### **How to order lunch and breakfast:**

TCGIS has partnered with BOONLI to provide a secure, fast, and easy-to-use online ordering system that allows parents and guardians to view our lunch and breakfast menu, order, prepay and manage student meals from their smartphone, tablet or computer.

To set up an account, please go to: <https://tcgis.boonli.com>. Click on *Create an Account*. For school password information, please contact [ordering@tcgis.org](mailto:ordering@tcgis.org). Once your account is set up and you have linked your students to your account, you can start ordering. The order period opens around the 15th of every month and will stay open for 7 days (Monday through Sunday). Lunch and breakfast are pre-order one month for the following month. Please contact [ordering@tcgis.org](mailto:ordering@tcgis.org) with any questions about account registration or ordering. (Click [here](#) for more detailed instructions on how to navigate the Boonli website.)

### **Application for Educational Benefits:**

Schools continue to collect Applications for Educational Benefits to determine if a student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals. Students who officially qualify for free/reduced-price meals may also qualify for reduced fees at TCGIS school programs (Kinderclub, afterschool enrichment classes, athletic activities, field trips etc.) Your application may also help the school qualify for education funds, discounts, and other meal programs.

To apply, please complete an [Application for Educational Benefits](#). Applications can be submitted at any time during the school year. However in order to receive these benefits for the first day of school, please submit your completed application form no later than August 18th, 2024. Forms may be emailed to Alex Weeding [aweeding@tcgis.org](mailto:aweeding@tcgis.org) or dropped off at the front office.

An application form with instructions will be available to all families in the first Elternbrief communications in late July/early August before the start of a new school year. A paper copy of the application form is available any time throughout the school year in the school office. You can also download these documents here:

- [Information Letter](#)
- [Application Form](#)

### **When a student does not pick up an ordered lunch:**

If you ordered lunch but your child is unable to pick up the lunch for some reason, please notify us as early as possible by emailing us at [lunch@tcgis.org](mailto:lunch@tcgis.org) or by calling the school's main telephone number **651-492-7106**.

If you would like, we can serve the lunch to a different child in your family or the meal can be made available to another student who forgot their lunch from home.

### **Lunch from Home:**

For those families who choose not to order the school lunch, please pack a nutritious lunch for your child daily. Students do not have access to refrigerators or microwaves, so please plan your lunches accordingly.

Single servings of milk are available for \$0.65 per carton and are recommended to be pre-ordered through our Boonli online ordering system or will be charged to your Boonli account when not pre-ordered.

**Please do not pack any items containing nut products in your students' lunch and snacks (ie. peanut butter & jelly sandwiches, almond butter, raw peanuts etc.),** so we can keep students with these allergies safe. Please, also make sure to pack any kind of silverware your child requires (i.e. for yogurts etc.) as utensils are only available for students with pre-ordered lunch meals.

In addition, students are not allowed to order food from a food delivery service or have food delivered to them by a food delivery service.

### **When a student forgets to bring lunch:**

If a student who did not pre-order a school lunch forgets to bring lunch, TCGIS will make every effort to ensure the student has something to eat. When possible, the school will notify the student's parents so they can arrange to bring a lunch to school. If TCGIS serves the student a school lunch, parents will see a Forgotten Lunch charge of \$0.00 in their Boonli account (in accordance with the new Free School Meals bill)..

### **Breakfast**

Please, pre-order breakfast in Boonli the same way you pre-order lunch. There will be a separate order tab "Breakfast: Aug/Sept". Breakfast will be available in the Cafeteria from 7:50-8:15am. Students can sit down in the Cafeteria to eat breakfast or take it and finish in their classroom.

If your student is signed up for AM Kinderclub and you ordered a breakfast, then your student will receive it during Kinderclub AM hours.

### **Snacks**

Snack times are incorporated into each school day and will be eaten in the classrooms. **Please do not pack any items containing nut products in your students' snacks.**

- *Kindergarten:* Snacks are a part of both the morning and afternoon schedules for our kindergarten students. Students bring their own snacks. We rely on each family to provide a healthy, nutritional snack each day. Fresh and healthy foods such as vegetables, fruit or cheese and crackers are encouraged.
- *Grades 1-8:* Students bring their own snacks. We rely on each family to provide a healthy, nutritional snack each day. Please realize that snack time is brief, so consider something tasty but easy. Fresh and healthy foods such as vegetables, fruit or cheese and crackers are encouraged.

### **Class Field Trip:**

As soon as we are made aware by the classroom teacher that a class is going on a field trip and will not be back in time for their scheduled lunch break, we will cancel all pre-ordered school lunches and a credit (if applicable) for the lunch will be applied to your Boonli account. Please ensure that your child brings a bag lunch from home for all school field trips.

**Parents/Guardians Eating Lunch with Their Child:**

Parents/guardians may visit and eat lunch with their child, but must follow the visitor and guest procedures. In addition, parents wishing to eat the school lunch will need to pre-order a lunch (\$5.40 per adult meal) by contacting the food service coordinator at least seven days prior to the visit. If a school lunch is not ordered, parents and guardians may bring their own lunch. Visiting parents and guardians may only share food with their own child.

**After-school Snack Program:**

TCGIS participates in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) After-school Snack Program. All students participating in our afterschool Kinderclub program receive an afterschool snack free of charge. All snacks are also provided by Done Right Food Services and fulfill the federal requirements of a healthy snack.

**Unpaid Meal Charge and Debt Collection Policy:**

Please [click](#) here to review our policy on unpaid meal charges and debt collection.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form Instructions](#), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax:  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email:  
[Program.Intake@usda.gov](mailto:Program.Intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**Library**

Our school Library team maintains the TCGIS library. Grades K-5 visit the library on a weekly basis, 6 & 7th graders every other week, and 8th graders at least once a month. During their visits students may check out

books, magazines, or CDs to take home. Books are available both in English and German. Please treat materials with care. There is a fee for lost or damaged books. Please contact the [Library](#) with any questions. For more information about the library, visit the [TCGIS Library homepage](#).

Fees

From time to time TCGIS may find it necessary to assess fees for lost materials, damaged equipment, additional educational services, or for extra-curricular opportunities. Parents will be notified of any fees as they occur.

Kinderclub (Extended Day Options)

Kinderclub is the fee-based before- and after-school care program at TCGIS. Hours of operation on school days are 6:30am-8:15am and 3:15pm-6:00pm. Kinderclub is open during School Breaks (Fall Break+Spring Break), Early Release Days (12:45pm-6:00pm) and Non-School days ( 8:00am-6:00pm). More information, including rates, and the Kinderclub calendar, can be found in the [Kinderclub Family Handbook 2024-25](#)

Lost and Found

Please mark all clothing and personal items with your child’s name and check Lost and Found regularly. All unmarked or unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization monthly.

Field Trips

Field trips are a vital part of the TCGIS experience. All field trips are intended to have a direct tie in with the curriculum. They also play an important role in our social curriculum by providing students opportunities to spend time and have fun together, thus strengthening the sense of community within the group. Our goal, however, is to build toward a consistent and fair structure in which each group of students is given parallel opportunities from year to year. The list below itemizes core field trips built into the curriculum in each grade. They may well be supplemented by additional opportunities or interchanged for equivalent opportunities scheduled by teachers throughout the year.

When students go on field trips, parents/guardians will be requested to sign a permission slip and in most cases, make a donation to cover the cost of the trip. Donations are also regularly gathered to put in a field trip scholarship fund. No student will be left out of a field trip due to inability to pay. Generosity from our parent community has kept this system in balance over the years and we project will continue to do so. Parents/guardians will receive information about how to sign up to chaperone and guidelines for chaperoning prior to field trips.

Field trips in the Como Park Area and/or TCGIS Vicinity

TCGIS is located in the beautiful Como Park area. The Conservatory, Zoo, playing fields and parks are all within walking distance. TCGIS teachers often take students on excursions in the immediate area of the school. Parents/guardians are asked to sign a permission slip at the beginning of each academic year indicating annual permission to attend local field trips within walking distance.

Potential Field Trip Experiences

KG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apple Orchard</li><li>• Fire house</li><li>• Food Co-op</li></ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bakken Museum</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fall and Spring field trips to the MN Wildlife Refuge Center</li><li>• Gibbs Farm</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minnesota Historical Society</li> <li>• Theater</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planetarium</li> <li>• Theater</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizenship Ceremony</li> <li>• Theater</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daylong field trips in coordination with the humanities curriculum</li> <li>• Neighborhood Clean-up</li> <li>• Valley Fair</li> <li>• Afton Alps Ski Trip</li> </ul>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biohaus at Concordia Language Village to tie in with Solar Energy Unit</li> <li>• Afton Alps Ski Trip</li> </ul>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valley Fair</li> <li>• Visible Heart Lab</li> <li>• Neighborhood Clean-up</li> <li>• Afton Alps Ski Trip</li> <li>• International Film Festival</li> </ul>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• German Students Trip to TCGIS</li> <li>• Capstone Trip to Germany</li> <li>• Afton Alps Ski Trip</li> </ul>

## Holidays

As a public school we may teach about religious traditions including holidays, but it is not our intent to engage in the celebration of religious practices. TCGIS aims to acknowledge cultural and religious holidays as a comprehensive plan that integrates the study of holidays and faith traditions into the curriculum.

### Goals:

- Create events that bring together the community. These events should grow out of a celebration of our academic curriculum and bring focus to the learning of our students. They can share food, performance and other academic and/or artistic activities.
- Expose students to a diversity of cultures.
- Ensure there is a balanced study of cultures at the school.
- Make sure activities planned for students are age appropriate and tied to curriculum goals. Themes may be restudied from year to year, but get more sophisticated to match the developmental level of students.

The following holidays may be acknowledged every year at age appropriate levels. Others might be tailored to specific aged classes in conjunction with curriculum themes:

International Peace Day	Sept. 21
Day of German Unity	Oct. 3
Halloween	Oct. 31
St. Martinstag	Nov. 11
Nikolaustag	Dec. 6 (A specifically German tradition instead of Christmas or Hanukkah)
Martin Luther King Day	Jan. 16 (celebrated yearly on 3rd Monday of January)
Valentine's Day	Feb. 14
Earth Day	Apr. 22

**Birthdays**

Students are welcomed and encouraged to celebrate their birthdays at TCGIS. We ask that the following guidelines are followed to ensure fun and safety for students.

- Students are invited to consider adding a book to their classroom library collection or the main library in honor of their special day. This is certainly not an expectation, but some families like this option over treats or in addition to a treat.
- Out of sensitivity to all students at our school we ask that individual birthday party invitations not be delivered at school. Teachers may not hand-out individual invitations. Within the first month of school parents may opt-in to a grade-level Family Contact List organized by Eltern Kontakte (EKs) and may use this list to send birthday invitations.
- If a student's birthday falls on a weekend or a day that school is not in session, the student may choose a day in close proximity to her or his actual day to acknowledge the birthday. Students with summer birthdays may choose a day such as their half birthday to celebrate.
- According to TCGIS [TCGIS policy 533 – Wellness](#), "Food will not be used as part of any school wide or classroom parties or celebrations, both individual (such as birthdays) or cultural, on school campus during the school day."

Thank you for supporting these guidelines, which will help all of us enjoy celebrating your student's special day!

**Communication****Front Office Communication**

The Front Office communicates important news with TCGIS families on a weekly basis during the school year through our school newsletter, the Rundbrief. The Rundbrief is sent electronically on Thursdays during the school year. The Rundbrief should be treated as the main method of school community news and updates, and families are expected to review the newsletter on a regular basis. If you need the Rundbrief delivered in a format other than email or are not receiving the weekly email, please notify the Front Office ([info@tcgis.org](mailto:info@tcgis.org)).

If you are unable to find your teacher's contact information, please contact the Front Office via email [info@tcgis.org](mailto:info@tcgis.org) or call 651-492-7106. School personnel will make their best effort to respond within two business days.

For requests for information, such as copies of public documents or additional materials from committee or board meetings, please send requests to [info@tcgis.org](mailto:info@tcgis.org) and the school will provide the information within a reasonable amount of time (usually 7-10 business days.)

**Parent/Teacher Communications**

Teachers communicate weekly with families in grades 1-3 through classroom email newsletters, while grades 4-8 communicate as deemed appropriate and necessary by the individual teacher.

Parents/guardians will receive formal communications about individual student progress four times a year. A goal setting conference will be held at the end of the first quarter. The first semester report card will be available online through the Infinite Campus parent portal at the end of January. A second set of conferences will be held in March. A final progress report will be available online at the end of the school year and a certificate of grade level graduation will be issued to each student.

Parents are strongly encouraged to attend conferences. Conferences will be scheduled by appointment for elementary students to ensure privacy and adequate time for all parties to prepare. Depending on pandemic or normal school circumstances, conferences will be either via Zoom or if in-person will be open conferences for middle school students. In addition to conferences, teachers are available by email, and before or after school by appointment. Please contact your student's teacher at least two school business days in advance to schedule an appointment.

## **Website**

The TCGIS website, [www.tcgis.org](http://www.tcgis.org), has been developed in order to provide families, teachers and the larger community with easy access to information and communication. We encourage you to use it as a means of staying connected and informed. We also welcome feedback on the site.

## **Permanent Records**

Parents and guardians may view a child's permanent record at any time. Please give TCGIS three school business days advance written notice, so that the records can be prepared. The Executive Director may request to be present or send a designee during your review of the file.

Important information on student data can be found in our Board Policy 515: [Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records](#).

## ***Special Education Services***

TCGIS believes every student has the right to learn in a bilingual environment. Special education staff members collaborate with all stakeholders to ensure student needs are met in the least restrictive environment. These services can include specialized personnel, special instructional supplies and materials, modification to curriculum and other special accommodations. TCGIS makes every effort to support students in the general education classroom. [The Total Special Education Systems \(TSES\) Manual contains more specific information available here.](#)

### **Who should I contact if I have questions about special education?**

If you have questions regarding special education services and supports, and whether or not special education may be appropriate for your child, it is recommended parents speak with the Lead Special Education Coordinator. Families with students receiving special education services are encouraged to bring questions or concerns to the student's case manager before contacting the Lead Special Education Coordinator.

## ***Health and Safety***

### **Accidents**

All accidents that occur on the school grounds must be reported to the school office. Students will receive care consistent with the severity of the injury. Minor abrasions and bumps will be cleaned and bandaged. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately when major accidents occur. The emergency medical services will be summoned in more serious situations.

### **Emergency Information Forms**

1. The school office maintains a health information form for each student. A new form must be completed each school year. Please keep the information up to date on these forms. We will use

them to contact you in case of emergency. Your signature on the form is critical as it allows the school authorization to secure medical attention/aid for your student in an emergency. All information will be held in confidence.

2. *Please notify the school immediately, in writing, if you change your address or telephone number(s).*
3. *If you leave your student(s) with another person and you are out of the area, please send a note to the school office giving the name, address, and phone numbers for the temporary guardian. Also include permission for this person to check your student out of school. Please note the length of time you will be out of town. The school office will hold all information in confidence.*

## Parent Communication in Emergency/Crisis Situations

1. Parents/guardians will be notified of the situation and pick up procedures through the school's Swift K12 emergency & general alert system. Based on the preference that you selected in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal, you will receive an email, telephone call or text message. Additionally, we will post information on the school website.
2. It is important in an emergency situation for school telephone lines to remain open for communication with emergency service personnel. For the safety of students, we ask parents not to call the school, but to check their Alert Solution messages and the school's website during a crisis for information from us.

## Student Medication

Parents are advised that, if possible, medication should be given at home and on a schedule other than school hours. The school district acknowledges that some students may require prescribed drugs or medication during the school day. The school district's licensed school nurse, trained health service clerk, executive director, or teacher will administer prescribed medications in accordance with law and school district procedures.

### I. REQUIREMENTS

- A. All prescription medications or drugs to be administered at school require an Authorization for Administering Medications form (FORM 516) completed by a healthcare professional and parent/guardian. The licensed school nurse may accept an oral or written request followed by the required authorization (FORM 516) received within two school days.
- B. An Authorization for Administering Medications form (FORM 516) must be completed annually (once per school year) and/or when a change in the prescription or requirements for administration occurs.
- C. Prescription medication must be in the original pharmacy or medicine container, labeled for the student by a pharmacist in accordance with law. The dosage listed on the label must be consistent with the dosage requested by the parent and prescribing health care provider on FORM 516. If dosage changes before a refill container is received by the school, the updated dosage will be written on the existing container label. A new container with the new dosage on the label is required as soon as a refill is obtained and must be administered in a manner consistent with the instructions on the label. The school nurse may allow a family two days to provide the required authorization (FORM 516) if a verbal or written request is received by the school.
- D. The school nurse, or other designated person, may request to receive further information about the prescription, if needed, prior to administration of the substance.
- E. Over-the-counter-medications must be in the original container and labeled with the student's name. Before administering any over-the-counter medications, an Authorization for Administering Medications form (FORM 516) must be on file with the school, completed by a parent/guardian when dosing according to label, or a MD signature will be required.

- F. All medications (prescription and over-the-counter), other than those indicated below, are not to be carried by the student, but will be left with the appropriate school district personnel. Under certain circumstances, students may be authorized to carry and administer medications. Examples may include, but are not limited to: prescription asthma medications self-administered with an inhaler (See Part N.4. below), and medications administered as noted in a written agreement between the school district and the parent or as specified in an IEP (individualized education program), Section 504 plan, or IHP (individualized healthcare plan). A student's parent/guardian will complete an Authorization to Self-Administer Medication form (FORM 516 SA). The nurse will assess the student's knowledge and skills pertaining to his/her treatment. Self-administration will be approved if the student is considered knowledgeable and able to self-administer medication safely.
- G. All medications (prescription and over-the-counter) shall be stored in a locked cabinet, with the exception of refrigerated medications and those permitted to be carried by students. Controlled substance medications will be counted (or liquid level noted) in the student's health file on the Medication Administration form.
- H. Medication administration shall be recorded on the Medication Administration form. Dates and initials of administering personnel shall be recorded for each dose administered. Signatures and corresponding initials will be included on the form. Medication will be administered within a half-hour before or after the time indicated on the form. Administration time will also be noted for medication not given within this hour time, and any other PRN medications. Dosage changes should have a discontinued date for the old dose and the new dose with a start date. Discontinued meds should be indicated with a discontinued date and removed from the active file. Medications and dosage will be recorded by using the medication name followed by dosage in milligrams. The number of tablets or liquid measure may be included in parenthesis as an aid for non-licensed staff.
- I. For drugs or medicine used by children with a disability, administration may be as provided in the IEP, Section 504 plan or IHP.
- J. The procedures for day field trips are as follows:
  - 1. For day Medications will be pre-packaged by nurses to be administered by the delegated district employee. Sealed medication envelopes will include the student name, medication, dosage, number of pills, and time to be administered.
  - 2. PRN medication will also be sent with the responsible school personnel, including any individualized Emergency Action Plan that dictates the use of such medication.
  - 3. The school personnel who are in possession of and who are trained to administer the medication must remain with the student at all times during the field trip. Any student with medication on day field trips may not be placed in the care of a chaperone or in the care of a staff member without the training to administer the medication.
- K. Medication to be used on overnight school trips will be provided by parents in accordance with above requirements the previous week before the field trip to the appropriate school district health personnel.
- L. This policy and the procedures contained within shall be reviewed and any changes developed in consultation with a licensed school nurse, a public or private health organization, or other appropriate party (if appropriately contracted by the school district under Minn. Stat. § 121A.21). The school district administration shall submit these procedures and any additional guidelines and procedures necessary to implement this policy to the school board for approval. Upon approval by the school board, such guidelines and procedures shall be an addendum to this policy.
- M. Specific Exceptions

1. Special health treatments and health functions, such as catheterization, tracheostomy suctioning, and gastrostomy feedings do not constitute administration of drugs and medicine;
2. Emergency health procedures, including emergency administration of drugs and medicine are not subject to this policy;
3. Drugs or medicine provided or administered by a public health agency to prevent or control an illness or a disease outbreak are not governed by this policy;
4. Drugs or medicines that are prescription asthma or reactive airway disease medications can be self-administered by a student with an asthma inhaler if:
  - a) the school district has received the Authorization to Self-Administer Medication form (FORM 516 SA) from the pupil's parent permitting the student to self-administer the medication.
  - b) the inhaler is properly labeled for that student; and
  - c) the parent has not requested school personnel to administer the medication to the student.
5. Medications:
  - a) that are used off school grounds;
  - b) that are used in connection with athletics or extracurricular activities; or
  - c) that are used in connection with activities that occur before or after the regular school day are not governed by this policy.
6. Prescription epinephrine auto-injectors:
  - a) At the start of each school year or at the time a student enrolls in school, whichever is first, a student's parent, school staff, including those responsible for student health care, and the prescribing medical professional must develop and implement an individualized written Emergency Action Plan for a student who is prescribed epinephrine auto-injectors. This plan will allow a student to:
    - (1) possess epinephrine auto-injectors; or
    - (2) If the parent and prescribing medical professional determine the student is unable to possess the epinephrine, have immediate access to epinephrine auto-injectors in close proximity to the student at all times during the instructional day.
  - b) The plan must designate the school staff responsible for implementing the student's health plan, including recognizing anaphylaxis and administering epinephrine auto-injectors when required, consistent with state law. This health plan may be included in a student's § 504 plan.
  - c) A school district and its agents and employees are immune from liability for any act or failure to act, made in good faith, in implementing this section and Minn. Stat. § [121A.2207](#).

## Allergy-Aware School

Due to allergies we are a nut, tree-nut and latex aware school. Please do not pack any items containing these products.

## General Student Illness Guidelines

If a student becomes ill during normal school hours, a Health Service Associate or other trained staff will provide routine assessment and first aid; if too ill to remain at school, the Health Office will contact adult(s) in the order designated on the student's Emergency Contact list (parents/guardians will be notified first) as soon as possible. Students are not allowed to call/text parents for pick up.

A parent, guardian, or other designated responsible adult must be available to pick up the student within one hour of phone call in the event of a serious illness or injury; this is for the health and safety of the student, as well as for the rest of the student body.

Students who show signs of a communicable condition as outlined below should not come to School, and will be sent home if symptoms develop during the School day:

- Fever of 100 F/37.7 C or higher as measured by a thermometer under the arm or orally. Children must be fever free (98 F/37 C) for 24 hours, at least one full day of absence, before returning to School.
- Vomiting or diarrhea. Children must remain at home for 24 hours, at least one full day of absence, after the final episode of vomiting or diarrhea.
- Severe or uncontrollable cough.
- A rash that may be disease-related, or for which the cause is unknown.
- Yellow or green mucus coming from the nose or mouth.
- Too ill to participate in recess or gym class.

We ask that families report all illnesses to the Front Office by telephone (651-492-7106) or email at onset or diagnosis to assist in protecting the School community from communicable illnesses such as strep throat, pink eye, or head lice. In reports of illness, students' names shall be kept confidential and the Health Office will use discretion when informing classrooms and/or the larger student body of communicable illness.

## COVID-19 Illness Guidelines

We follow MDH and CDC guidance. Since the guidelines are subject to change, please look for our current guideline on our Website under Incident Response Team (IRT) updates [IRT Updates](#).

## General School Policies

### Homework

Homework is part of the TCGIS program. We assign homework to provide opportunities for:

Students to:

- Develop independent work skills
- Master skills taught earlier at school
- Integrate school skills into home life

Parents to:

- Learn what topics are being taught in school
- Witness skills students are learning

### Responsibilities for Homework

Teacher	Student	Parent
1. Review homework expectations with students	1. Give best effort for the predetermined amount of time	1. Provide student a work time and space
2. Give work that should be manageable within recommended time frames for student's age	2. Try work yourself before asking for help	2. Help student plan to structure time to include time for homework
3. Provide homework in a predictable pattern	3. Ask for help if you need it	3. Be in communication with the teacher about homework concerns.

4. Assign work that reviews skills already taught 5. Be in communication with student and parents regarding potential individual adaptations to assignments		4. Read to your student daily in any language (yes even if they can read themselves) 5. Write a note of explanation if student was unable to complete assignments on a given day.
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## Standardized Testing

TCGIS students participate in a variety of program-based, school-wide evaluations. We test German fluency with in-house-developed screeners and students take the ELFE-II twice yearly in 5th–7th grades. The Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA) measuring German speaking and listening is given at the end of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. The German language A1 exam from the European Common Reference is given in grade 3 and the A2 is given in grade 5. The DSD-I is given in grade 8, which opens opportunities to attend post-secondary training in Germany. State-required Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA III) are given in reading and math each year grades 3–8 at TCGIS. The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in science is given in grades 5 and 8. All MCA tests are administered in English. Additional district assessments may be used to support student learning. Additionally we are administering the Formative Reading Assessment System for Teachers (FAST) three times annually– autumn, winter and spring. The reading and mathematics formative assessments assist us in early intervention helping struggling students.

Please find a link to the TCGIS Assessment Program [here](#).

TCGIS acknowledges concerns locally and nationally regarding ‘too much testing.’ The above assessments are critical in creating a complete snapshot of each child. We use multiple data points in assessing who needs interventions, what type of interventions, for what length of time and at what level of intervention intensity.

See MDE Testing Opt-out information [HERE](#).

## Twin Cities Immersion School Middle School Academic Honesty Policy

Academic honesty and personal integrity are an important part of growing as a student and continuing on the educational path to adulthood. TCGIS expects that our students will not cheat, lie, plagiarize, or commit other acts of academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism is the practice of taking someone’s words or works and passing it off as your own and is not tolerated at TCGIS. Abusing translation websites or tools is also plagiarism. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- Using someone else’s words or ideas without proper citation
- Using a translation website or tool to produce your own work. Writing in German is an important skill that we emphasize in our programming.
- Copying someone else’s work and calling it your own
- Copying and citing a work that is longer than a paragraph (print or online sources)

Cheating is work that doesn’t reflect your own effort and understanding. This can take many forms and will not be tolerated at TCGIS. Cheating includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- Looking at others’ answers on tests and homework
- Taking someone else’s paper and putting your name on it
- Copying someone else’s work, answer for answer

- Rearranging words from someone else's work
- Allowing someone to copy from your paper
- Telling someone else the answers on an assignment or test
- Having someone else do your work for you (Friends, Family, Tutors, etc.)

The Principal will support teachers in the cases of academic dishonesty. In the case of academic dishonesty the offender will receive a zero on an assignment or test. Further consequences or opportunities to make up the assignment will be discussed on a per incident basis.

## The Responsive Classroom Approach

The *Responsive Classroom* is an approach to elementary teaching that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. *Developmental Designs* is the middle school equivalent of the approach. The goal is to enable optimal student learning. Created by classroom teachers and backed by evidence from independent research, the *Responsive Classroom* approach is based on the premise that students learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills. The approach therefore consists of classroom and school-wide practices for deliberately helping students build academic and social-emotional competencies.

### Guiding Principles

Seven principles, informed by the work of educational theorists and the experiences of exemplary classroom teachers, guide the *Responsive Classrooms* approach:

1. The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
2. How students learn is as important as what they learn: Process and content go hand in hand.
3. The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
4. To be successful academically and socially, students need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.
5. Knowing the students we teach-individually, culturally, and developmentally-is as important as knowing the content we teach.
6. Knowing the families of the students we teach and working with them as partners is essential to students' education.
7. How the adults at school work together is as important as their individual competence: lasting change begins with the adult community.

### Classroom Practices

At the heart of the *Responsive Classroom* approach are ten classroom practices:

1. *Morning/Advisory Meeting* - gathering as a whole class each day to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead
2. *Rule Creation* - helping students create classroom rules to ensure an environment that allows all class members to meet their learning goals
3. *Interactive Modeling* - teaching students to notice and internalize expected behaviors through a unique modeling technique
4. *Positive Teacher Language* - using words and tone as a tool to promote students' active learning, sense of community, and self-discipline
5. *Logical Consequences* - responding to misbehavior in a way that allows students to fix and learn from their mistakes while preserving their dignity
6. *Guided Discovery* - introducing classroom materials using a format that encourages independence, creativity, and responsibility
7. *Academic Choice*- increasing student learning by allowing students teacher-structured choices in their work

8. *Classroom Organization* - setting up the physical room in ways that encourage students' independence, cooperation, and productivity
9. *Working with Families* - creating avenues for hearing parents' insights and helping them understand the school's teaching approaches
10. *Collaborative Problem Solving* - using conferencing, role playing, and other strategies to resolve problems with students

### **School-wide Practices**

Schools implementing the *Responsive Classroom* approach school-wide typically adopt the following practices:

- Aligning policies and procedures with *Responsive Classroom* philosophy - making sure everything from the lunch routine to the discipline policy enhances the self-management skills that students are learning through the *Responsive Classroom* approach.
- Allocating resources to support *Responsive Classroom's* implementation - using time, money, space, and personnel to support staff in learning and using the *Responsive Classrooms* approach.
- Planning all-school activities to build a sense of community - giving all of the school's students and staff opportunities to learn about and from each other through activities such as all-school meetings, cross-age recess or lunch, buddy classrooms, and cross-age book clubs.
- Welcoming families and the community as partners - involving family and community members in the students' education by maintaining two-way communication, inviting parents and others to visit and volunteer, and offering family activities.
- Organizing the physical environment to set a tone of learning - making sure, for example, that school wide rules are posted prominently, displays emphasize student work, and all school spaces are welcoming, clean, and orderly.

Source: <http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about/aboutrc.html>

### **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**

Additionally, beginning in the academic year 2016-17 and continuing in 2024-25, we have strengthened and improved the process by which we help struggling students in areas of behavior. This PBIS framework intersects nicely with our on-going work in Responsive Classroom.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a framework or approach for helping schools select and organize evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students.

- PBIS is NOT a packaged curriculum, intervention or manual.
- PBIS is a prevention-oriented way for schools to:
  - Organize evidence-based practices
  - Improve use of evidence-based practices
  - Maximize academic and social behavior outcomes for students
- PBIS supports the success of ALL students.
- PBIS is known as SWPBS, which is short for "School-wide Positive Behavior Supports."
- PBIS is based on principles of applied behavior analysis and the prevention approach, along with the values of positive behavior support.

Source: <https://pbismn.org/about/index.php>

## Alcohol and other Drugs

TCGIS prohibits the use of controlled substances, toxic substances, and/or alcohol before, during, or after school hours at school or in any other school-related location (buses, extracurricular activities, etc.). Use of controlled substances as prescribed for medical conditions by a physician do not constitute a violation of the School's Drug Free policies. Students prescribed controlled substances shall comply with the School Board Policy 516: [Medication Policy](#).

Please refer to School Board Policy 418 : [Drug Free Workplace/Drug Free School](#) for further information.

## Dress

TCGIS respects the individuality and self-expression of each student, and leaves the right to determine student dress to each family, provided dress choices meet the following guidelines:

- Articles of clothing shall not be destructive to school property
- Articles of clothing shall comply with health & safety requirements
- Articles of clothing are not contrary to the School's values
- Articles of clothing are not disruptive to the learning experience

Please review further tips and guidelines for student dress below:

1. Because TCGIS is implementing a respectful atmosphere that values tolerance and diversity, we ask that all attire be free from reference to violence (including weapons), harmful substances (including alcohol, drugs and tobacco), harassment, foul language and discrimination (gender, racial, religious etc.)
2. TCGIS expects that students will come to school appropriately dressed for learning and play. Clean, neat and simple should be the guiding principles in selecting your student's clothing. We recommend clothing that is easy to wash, easy for students to put on themselves, and that will be comfortable in the classroom as well as in PE and outdoors.
3. Students are expected to be dressed appropriately for the weather. Outdoor recess is part of students' daily routine and will take place unless it is dangerously stormy or the temperature is well below zero. All outdoor wear needs to be labeled on the inside of the item.
4. It is advisable that students keep a change of clothes in their locker in case of spills, accidents, etc. Please label these clothing items with your student's name. These items should be rotated periodically to ensure that they are appropriate for current weather conditions.
5. Outdoor items (jackets, mittens, boots, etc.) and extra clothes should be marked with the student's name to which they belong.
6. Shoes in school are required by law and prevent injury. Parents may be called to bring shoes or slippers with rubber or waterproof bottoms if their student comes to school without them. Students who do not have indoor shoes will be required to wear outdoor boots until the shoes arrive, if available.
7. Each student is required to keep a pair of indoor shoes at school for classroom use. All shoes or slippers must have a rubber or other waterproof bottom in case of an emergency. Students also need a pair of shoes with good ankle support and laced or with Velcro closure for Sport Class. If desired, the same pair of shoes can be used for both. All students should come to school wearing shoes that are safe for running and climbing and should not fall off during activity (laced or Velcro closure). Occasionally Sport is held outside. The student cannot use shoes used as indoor shoes for Sport outside. The street shoes worn to school in that case but be able to be used for rigorous physical activity.

For more information on Student Dress, please review Policy 504: [Student Dress and Appearance Policy](#)

## Internet Policy

The School recognizes its role as a partner with families in teaching students the skills to be responsible users of the internet. The School will strive to maintain an internet environment which provides access to appropriate educational sites and materials for students and staff. The guidelines below define appropriate educational and ethical uses of the internet at school, identify individual student responsibilities, and outline the responsibilities of the school in carrying out these guidelines.

### **Staff responsibilities regarding Internet use:**

1. Teach students the appropriate and ethical use of the Internet and email.
2. Help students understand the guidelines.
3. Help students locate appropriate sites for school use.
4. Monitor student use of the Internet and help them back out of inappropriate sites.
5. Not post any student work to the Internet without parent/guardian permission. If permission is granted, items will be considered fair use and available to the public.
6. Limit access to the Internet or the School Computer Network if the student does not follow these guidelines.

### **Student responsibilities regarding Internet use:**

1. Be polite.
2. Use appropriate language. That means, do not swear, or use bad language.
3. Use Internet sites that are connected to what I am studying in class or that a teacher has ok'd for my use.
4. Respect school rules and behavior standards.
5. Use the computer network in a manner that does not violate any law, regulations or copyright.
6. Accurately represent myself. That means I will use only my own name, not someone else's and never use my whole name or give my address or telephone number.
7. Send email only with my teacher's permission.
8. Remember that email is not private. That means my teacher or other people who operate the network can read it.
9. Respect the privacy of others. That means I will not use someone else's password or open or change anyone else's files.
10. Respect computer equipment and the use of the network and share computer resources and time with other students.
11. We may not make purchases on the internet, unless authorized by a teacher.

Each student will be sent an internet use permission form that needs to be filled out and returned to the school. Your student will not be able to use the internet until this form is returned.

Please see full School Board Policy 524 : [Internet Acceptable Use and Safety Policy](#) for further information.

## Toys and Games

Students must not use non-TCGIS-supplied toys or games during the school day without special permission from a teacher (such as, for instance, for show-and-tell).

## Student Desks, Lockers, Personal Possessions

School lockers, desks and the personal possessions of students and/or a student's person may be searched when school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school

rules. The search will be reasonable in its scope and intrusiveness. Please see the full [Board Policy 502](#) for more information.

## Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

Students must not use personal electronic devices such as cell phones, smartphones and smartwatches, tablets, game devices, or MP3 players during the school day without permission from a teacher\*\* or administration. If a student brings such an electronic device to school, the device must remain in the student's locker or backpack for the entire day. Teachers have the authority to confiscate a personal electronic device from a student if they see or hear it and may return it to the student at the end of the hour, or at the end of the school day. Further device related disruptions may result in disciplinary action. Exceptions for medical reasons should go through the health office and Health Service Associate. Students may not contact parents on their cell phones to come pick them up for illness. Students must check in with the Health Office and the Health Service Associate will determine if a phone call needs to be made to parents.

### Cell Phone Rules:

- Students do not use them. Teachers do not see them.
- They may be taken away and brought to Dean's office.

### Disciplinary Action:

1st offense--Teacher Discretion/Phone is taken away

2nd offense--Goes to Dean's office until the end of the day. The student may pick up at 3:15 and will discuss further expectations with the Dean.

3rd offense-- A Call Home/Parent must come to school to Pick Up the Phone.

4th offense--Cell Phone lives in the Dean's office for 3 days--including a Wednesday. Phone will be released to a parent after the third day.

5th offense--Parent Conference/Cell Phone is kept in the office for 5 school days. Phone is released to the parent on the fifth day after a parent meeting with the student and an administrator. The student must check their phone in at the beginning of every lesson with the teacher or it should be left home.

### Additional Items:

The School Board has the following policy:

The misuse of technology including, but not limited to, teasing, intimidating, defaming, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district by sending or posting email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs, also may constitute an act of bullying regardless of whether such acts are committed on or off school district property and/or with or without the use of school district resources.

Technology misuse in this capacity would result in disciplinary action in accordance with Bullying.

## Harassment

TCGIS is committed to peaceful and respectful interactions between all people. Harassment and/or violence, including sexual harassment, of any kind within the community will not be tolerated. To make an official report of harassment and/or violence, contact building report takers, the Executive Director or Director of HR & Operations.

Please see School Board Policy 413 : [Harassment and Violence Policy](#) for further information.

## **Bullying**

TCGIS is committed to preventing, when possible, and providing timely and effective response to incidents of bullying.

Bullying is defined as any written or verbal expression, physical act or gesture, or pattern thereof, by a student that is intended to cause or is perceived as causing distress to a student or a group of students and which substantially interferes with another student's or students' educational benefits, opportunities, or performance. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, conduct by a student against another student or a group of students that a reasonable person under the circumstances knows or should know has the effect of:

- harming a student or a group of students;
- damaging a student's or a group of students' property;
- placing a student or a group of students in reasonable fear of harm to person or property;
- creating a hostile educational environment for a student or a group of students; or
- intimidating a student or a group of students.

An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school district or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, or employees. The misuse of technology including, but not limited to, teasing, intimidating, defaming, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district by sending or posting e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs, also may constitute an act of bullying regardless of whether such acts are committed on or off school district property and/or with or without the use of school district resources.

To make an official report of bullying, contact one of the building report takers, the Executive Director or the Dean of SpEd.

For further information, refer to School Board Policy 514 : [Bullying Prohibition Policy](#).

## ***School Support***

### **Fundraising**

All fundraising done by parents, students or staff at school should be done with prior approval by the director and the Fundraising and Development Committee or the Parent Teacher Organization. Guidelines for what will be approved are: school related events, topics directly related to a class project or theme of study, or support of groups in which our community members are members. The community member(s) involved need to clearly label all fundraising materials with their name.

### **Parent Teacher Organization**

The PTO streamlines some of the many volunteer activities at TCGIS, to better coordinate fundraising efforts, and to provide new ways for parents to engage as our school grows from year to year. The PTO is open to all teachers and parents/guardians of students at TCGIS. Just attend a meeting and sign the roster and you will

be considered a member. The PTO formally organized as a Minnesota nonprofit corporation in March 2009. For more information, go to <http://www.tcgis.org/pto.html>.

## TCGIS Volunteering

Parent/guardian and community volunteers are an important part of a successful school year for our students, teachers, and staff. The goal of the volunteer program is to provide opportunities that support learning and achievement of all students by coordinating engaging and effective volunteer experiences that meet the needs of TCGIS. Volunteering is also a great way to engage with and get to know other TCGIS community members. Whether you have two hours a week or two hours a year, there is a meaningful way for you to contribute to TCGIS. Volunteers who will be working alone with students will be required to have a [background check](#) performed and submit the \$20 background check fee.

## Visiting the School

1. Parents who want to visit a classroom on an individual basis should contact the classroom teacher. To enable our teaching staff to establish appropriate classroom management procedures, we discourage visitors in the classroom during the month of September.
2. *Twin Cities German Immersion School values the safety of the students and adults in the building. With this in mind, all visitors, including parents and regular volunteers, must report to the Front Office upon arrival. Visitors must sign in and wear a visitor's pass at all times. Visitors, including parents/guardians, may be asked to show a valid photo ID and state the reason for visiting before passing the Front Office.*

*Your adherence to these policies and procedures help to make TCGIS a safe and healthy learning environment for our students. Dankeschön.*