**TCGIS Strategic Planning Retreat 2014**

During November 2014, the TCGIS School Board met on November 1st and November 19th to review the Strategic Plan developed by the previous Board during 2012 and think about setting new directions for the next three years. It was both instructive and fulfilling to compare the hopes and aspirations that were put in place three years ago with the realities in place mid-way through the 2014-2015 academic year.

Step One
Compare the “wish List” from the Strategic Plan from 2012 with the current realities at TCGIS

**Legend**
- **Substantially Complete**
- **In Process**
- **Not Achieved**

**Area 1**
**Stable Well-Functioning Organization**
- a) Healthy & increased fundraising; finances support program
- b) Less hands-on Board work
- c) Board governs; Administration manages; Positive working relationships

**Area 2**
**Unified Curricular Vision & Supported Implementation**
- a) More money for staff development
- b) Consistent professional development plans
- c) Clearly documented curricular plan tied to goals
- d) Capitalizing on Amity potential: internships

**Area 3**
**Building that reflects & supports our vision**
- a) Clean, bright, colorful, modern classrooms & school
- b) Green space/gym in the right building
- c) Building meant for German School
- d) Auditorium/community building space
- e) Spacious and clean spaces
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Area 4
Innovative curriculum that embodies active & informed world citizenship
a) Hands-on curriculum with community service and field trips
b) Curricular understanding of “active informed world citizen”
c) Community & global projects in all grades
d) German spoken in classrooms by children and staff
e) Leader in demonstrating German culture and language
f) Building on German strengths of technology & environmental awareness

Area 5
Diverse, active, and thriving community of parents & students
a) Population more reflective of Twin Cities demographics
b) Active Community Building
c) Robust extra-curricular activities
d) Successful middle school with extra-curricular opportunities
e) Part of neighborhood
f) Further strengthening of performing arts

Area 6
Integrated, well-supported technology
a) Wise use of 21st century technology in classroom
b) Up-to-date and integrated staff supported technology
c) Technology a part of the classroom experience
d) Successful middle school with extra-curricular opportunities

Area 7
Happy, engaged, empowered teachers and staff
a) Happy, engaged, empowered teachers and staff
b) Engaged, enthused, invested, supportive teaching staff
c) Stable, satisfied teachers with competitive pay scale
Step Two

With the assistance of two enormously helpful facilitators (Anne Sturdivant and Morgan Brown), the entire Board spent considerable time as individuals writing down dreams and aspirations for the school. Utilizing a “forced priority method”, Board members placed his or her highest priority items on post-it notes and placed them on the whiteboard. These priorities were grouped into larger categories and, if possible, merged into more complete ideas.

A wide array of potential topics were proposed. Yet, the realities were that we needed to limit ourselves to a small number of areas to both manage the resources needed to capitalize them and to accurately evaluate our progress.

Following robust discussion, the Board narrowed down to three overriding areas of focus:

- Refining School Identity (Who we are)
- Optimize Infrastructure (Who we serve)
- Marketing & Fundraising (How we sustain ourselves)

These priorities are delineated on the following pages with sub-topics included as specific targets.

The Board also considered and adopted a Governance Model that keeps the Board focused on policy and evaluation with the Executive Director advising the Board. This decision, by default, places the Executive Director in charge of operations with the Board advising the Executive Director. The roles of the Board and the Executive Director were agreed on and will be communicated to the larger school community at a future meeting.

The TCGIS School Board for 2014-15 are:

- Denny Morrow, Chair
- Rob Hennelly, Vice-Chair
- Barb Spangle, Secretary
- Ted Johnson, Finance Committee Chair
- Kelly Laudon, Personnel Committee Chair
- Burhhard Tiessen, Communication Chair
- Natalie Yaeger, Parent Liaison
- Hunter Goetzman, Faculty Member
- Michelle Wallace, Faculty/Governance
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**School Identity**
- Healthy Communication and Trust
- Serving Broader Community
- Vision Implementation

**Optimize Infrastructure**
- Community Building
- Governance
- Personnel Development

**Marketing & Fundraising**
- Long-range Planning
- Stable Finances
- Marketing
Category #1
School Identity

Healthy Communication & Trust
- Rebuilding trust within the entire school community
- Transparency in Print, Email, Roles
- Decision-making reflective of multiple stakeholders

Serving Broader Community
- Study possibility of adding a second campus
- Study adding busing to TCGIS services to families
- Increase student diversity

Vision Implementation
- Be the premier school for German speaking teachers
- Increase school pride and spirit
- Focus on serving students and parents
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Category #2
Optimize Infrastructure

**Community Building**
- Clarity in volunteering opportunities
- New vehicles for parent, student interaction
- Re-engaging parents in marketing and fundraising

**Governance**
- Clarity in evaluation of leadership and board expectations
- Establish annual Board calendar of events & decisions
- Create Infrastructure planning process

**Personnel Development**
- Focus on staff retention and professional respect
- Develop master plan for staffing differentiation
- Establish an equitable compensation plan
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Category #3
Marketing and Fundraising

Long-range Planning
- Study possibility of adding a second campus
- Review of school policies
- Develop new master plan for transportation

Stable Finances
- Establish fundraising policy
- Diversify fundraising resources
- Understanding the "life cycle" of a charter school

Marketing
- Manage the tension of expectations on a public school budget
- Develop signature marketing events
- Public Relations materials review