<center>**TWIN CITIES GERMAN IMMERSION SCHOOL LITERACY PLAN**</center>

MN Statute 120B.12 requires a school district to adopt a local literacy plan to have every child reading at or above grade level **by the end of third grade**. Literacy is the ability to read, write, speak, listen, view, visually represent, and think in order to communicate and contribute to society. "Reading well **by grade three** ensures that a student has a solid foundation of literacy skills to continue to expand their understanding of what they read, make meaning, and transfer that learning across all subject areas."

Twin Cities German Immersion School builds its base for English literacy proficiency through curriculum, instruction and assessment in the target language of German. We build oral language skills as well as basic reading and writing literacy instruction in German. Formal instruction in English is added in Third grade. We believe literacy is the foundation for learning.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES, GOALS & OBJECTIVES:
Everyone needs to be a lifetime reader and model good reading habits.
- Parents (significant others) play a major role in early literacy. Parents should read to their child, and provide a variety of enriching experiences that promote learning.
- Teachers should value and use students' prior knowledge and experiences to enhance literacy.
- Students expand their world-view through reading and writing; it touches the heart and teaches the mind.

Everyone can learn to read.
- Teachers should use a variety of teaching strategies to accommodate all children.
- Teachers must intervene early to ensure all students' success.
- Staff development is critical to a literacy program.
- Reading and writing instruction should emphasize a balanced approach to teaching and should include: phonics, reading strategies, authentic writing, vocabulary building, and comprehension in a variety of genres.
- Students must learn to access and use a variety of information.

The more students read & write, the better they become; time on task is critical.
- Everyone can learn to enjoy reading and writing.
- Teachers must read to students daily.
- Students should be reading meaningful text daily.
- Students must write meaningful texts every day.
- Teaching reading and writing is the responsibility of all teachers, parents and community leaders.

Literacy is a transferable skill.
- As an Immersion School we introduce core literacy skills in Grades K-2 in German.
- English specific skills such as spelling, vocabulary, grammar and exposure to literature unique to English are introduced in English class for 50 minutes a day starting in Third Grade.
- The effectiveness in building English specific skills is documented through our own successful test scores as well as data from Immersion Schools internationally.

Students **in grades K-3** are assessed at least three times per academic year to determine literacy proficiency. Assessments focus on key literacy indicators determined by our grade-specific achievement goals with instruction concentrated in: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. The achievement goals are based on grade level MN ELA Academic Standards (English) and German proficiency standards. Proficiency is determined by locally developed benchmarks and norms. Information gathered from these assessments will be used in planning targeted group instruction.

IDENTIFICATION, PLACEMENT, AND ASSESSMENT
Teachers regularly assess students' progress in reading, to identify areas of student need. Students are measured and monitored individually with a literacy assessment portfolio. Some students require additional literacy lessons (different levels of interventions beyond Core Instruction) while others are likely to make good progress without extra help. A student may be in Core Instruction for fluency but needs more intensive intervention for comprehension, thus our assessment plan includes multiple data measures.

The assessment plan has three main objectives:
1. Regularly identify students who may need extra instruction or intensive interventions if they are to make grade-level proficiency in reading by the end of the school year (screening).
2. Match instructional planning with the needs of individual students (diagnostic).
3. Monitor students' progress during the year to determine whether students are making adequate progress in their literacy development (progress monitoring). Progress monitoring requires continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions and whether the instruction provided is intensive enough to help students achieve grade-level standards by the end of each year.

The focus in assessment is to teach and reach the "whole child" – the cognitive growth, mental and physical health, and social emotional welfare. At any given time, teachers interact with the literacy content they are teaching using numerous common assessments (see table). We use a variety of assessment tools such as oral reading records, observations, surveys, interviews, conferences, and commercial assessments. All assessment tools are used to measure and evaluate students to inform instructional practices. We recognize that different learners learn best at different times with different contents and contexts. This leads us to continually strive toward making adjustments in curriculum, assessment, and instruction.

Assessment Process

Assessment Plan	Assessment Options
Screening – a first step to identify students' needs	FastBridge early Reading composite scores Locally developed phonics and reading fluency measures (Curriculum-based measures) MCA data (Grades 3+) Survey about reading background
Diagnostic – to get more clear information for supporting instructional practices.	FastBridge reading assessments Locally developed phonics and reading fluency measures (Curriculum-based measures)
Progress Monitoring – to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction	Locally developed phonics and reading fluency measures (Curriculum-based measures) Unit Tests Quizzes Reading Conferencing

Assessment Portfolio
Specific Assessment by Grade Level:

Grade	Assessments	Assessment Frequency and Time Frame
K-German	Identify letter sounds and read simple words Blending/segmenting of sounds; read simple syllables FAST (Formative System Assessment for Teachers)	Fall, winter and spring
1-German	High frequency words: decoding of words from different parts of speech Blending/segmenting of sounds and syllables: decoding of nouns Oral language: contextual reading out loud	Fall, winter and spring
2-German	High frequency words: decoding of letter / sound combinations, reading of multisyllable words Oral fluency: contextual reading out loud with fluency and accuracy Oral language: assessment of language proficiency in listening and speaking (SOPA)	Fall, winter and spring
3-German	A1-test in German: assessment of reading comprehension (available through ZfA) A1 oral language test in German: assessment of oral proficiency in listening and speaking (available through ZfA)	Spring Spring Fall, winter and spring
3 English	Reading Conferencing FAST (Formative System Assessment for Teachers) MCAs	Fall, winter and spring Fall, winter and spring Spring

INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES

Core instruction is aligned to the MN ELA Academic Standards and benchmarks along with additional German language proficiency benchmarks. All students participate in core instruction, whereas interventions are in addition to and aligned with this basic component of a comprehensive instructional framework. Even though core instruction is designed to provide all students with rigorous and relevant curriculum, it may not sufficiently meet the needs of every learner. Some students will require *intervention*, additional support and instruction on reading skills and strategies, to successfully master grade-level expectations. The systematic framework stated in the 'Identification, Placement, and Assessment' portion of this literacy plan outlines how data can be used to determine those students who need additional support. Intervention then is based on the formative, and summative data collected on students at risk, and instruction is provided with evidence- and research-based practices that are specific to the needs of a struggling reader.

A Tiered Model
Core Instruction is primary instruction for all students and designed to represent grade-level curriculum and instruction as intended for the regular German or English language arts classroom. All students are part of core instruction. Intervention is in addition to Academic Standards-based instruction.

Intervention I is designed to bridge the learning gap for students who are approaching grade-level mastery. These students need additional support to reach independence in meeting literacy demands using grade-level texts through supplemented instruction *in addition to core instruction*. Intervention in this tier can also be supported by differentiation in core academic areas that require complex reading tasks such as social studies & science.

Intervention II is designed to provide supplemental instruction *in addition to core instruction* to meet the significant learning needs of students struggling to perform at grade level.

Intervention III is designed to provide intensive intervention to students who exhibit significant difficulties in literacy and need sustained, direct instruction in small group or one-to-one settings *in addition to core instruction*. Students in Intervention III will need reading interventions that are aligned with core instruction and support independent reading practices throughout the school day **plus** intentional instruction in foundational reading skills. Twin Cities German Immersion School K-3 portion of the literacy plan features four main areas that are essential considerations in a comprehensive intervention plan designed to meet the needs of the emergent, early, transitional stages for struggling readers: A. Phonemic Awareness, B. Phonics, C. Fluency, D. Vocabulary, E. Comprehension

Not all students receiving intervention will need instruction in all of these areas. Data collected on student needs will help determine the interventions needed. Then the plan components are used to chart clear pathways of academic growth. The charts on the following pages are organized as a progression of skills and knowledge needed for students to move through the intervention stages toward grade-level proficiency.

Tiered Intervention Assessments
Along with regular progress assessments in reading, students in need of more help, will engage in additional instruction in their target area. Students receiving extra reading serves for a tiered intervention will have on-going assessments that will allow teachers to analyze the effectiveness of the intervention. Intervention techniques or assessment models may be adjusted accordingly.

Assessment and Grouping by Intervention level (German or English)

Level of Intervention	Grouping	Assessment	Shared Assessments
Classroom Intervention I	Whole class and flexible groups	Common and Screening Assessments Multi-year reading assessment data (K+) MCA III (3+)	Rubrics of Developmental Stage Formative Classroom Assessments Interest inventories Observation checklists Reader's response Self reflection
Intervention Level II	Groups of 1-6;	*Literacy specialists select targeted assessments to align with intervention content. These include locally developed measures of phonics, phonemic awareness, reading fluency, and other curriculum-based measures.*	
Intervention Level III	Groups of 1-6;		

SCHEDULING TIERED INTERVENTIONS

The daily reading block will enable flexible grouping to work on targeted literacy skills. Reading group periods may be planned or coordinated in collaboration with Special Education teachers and English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher so that specialized support can be integrated with targeted instruction in reading groups.

Our classrooms have additional instructional support through the availability of an Amity/CICD intern who is a teacher in training from Germany. During the reading block 3rd & 4th grade elementary teachers will be available to support small group instruction as needed for first and second grade students.

The intervention does not come at the expense of core instructional time. In order to adequately address the needs for scheduling interventions, a planning team comprised of K-4 classroom teachers meets and plans for the interventions. Their first priority is to identify students in need of intervention and make scheduling decisions accordingly.

SCHEDULING AND STAFFING OPTIONS FOR INTERVENTIONS
Kindergarten
Formal literacy instruction is included in the morning portion of our Kindergarten program. The afternoon portion of our day is available for small group follow-up and support. The afternoon schedule provides unstructured time for children to do free-choice activities. During that time Kindergarten teachers will provide literacy instruction to small groups needing instruction on targeted skills identified through use of the above-mentioned assessment tools.

First and Second Grade
Reading Groups will be facilitated for one hour each day. A low student/staff ratio can be maintained to target students at their own developmental level. The schedule will allow third and fourth grade teachers to come into the first and second grade classrooms while their students are attending English class. They will be able to lead reading groups with literature appropriate to the reading level of the small groups or individual students.

Third Grade
Literacy instruction happens throughout the day and extends into different subject areas. By the end of third grade, all students are expected to be fluent readers in all academic subjects. Students receive large group as well as small-group instruction based on regular reading skills assessments. Teacher- or intern-guided reading groups meet several times a week. Furthermore, kids do independent in-class reading and get reading assignments as homework on a daily basis. Reading activities that include customized, interactive vocabulary build-up are supported through the use of technology.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION/COMPONENTS OF CORE INSTRUCTION
A. Phonemic Awareness
According to the International Reading Association (IRA, 1998), phonological awareness encompasses larger units of sound, whereas phonemic awareness stems from this concept but refers to smaller units of sound. These small units of speech correspond to letter or an alphabetic writing system; these sounds are called phonemes and can make a difference in a word's meaning. A student's awareness of phonemes has been shown through extensive research to hold singular predictive power in their reading proficiency at the end of first grade. The student outcome with phonemic awareness is the ability of students to notice, think about, and manipulate individual sounds in spoken syllables and words.

B. Phonics
Phonics is the component of reading and writing that involves the reader's ability to synthesize, analyze, contextualize, pattern, spell, and recognize words. Being able to read, pronounce, and write words by associating letters with sounds represents the basics for the alphabetic principle. Phonics instruction is planned, sequential, explicit, systematic and multisensory. The student outcome with phonics is the understanding that there are systematic and predictable relationships between written letters and spoken words. Phonics instruction is a way of teaching reading that stresses learning how letters correspond to sounds and how to apply this knowledge in reading and spelling.

C. Fluency
Fluency represents combining appropriate phrasing and intonation while reading words automatically. Fluent readers recognize words automatically and can begin to attend to comprehension. The student outcome with fluency is the ability of students to read text with speed, accuracy, and proper expression.

D. Vocabulary
Vocabulary instruction should be done explicitly, in context, and over time to allow multiple exposures and reinforcement of essential skills. In many cases, students are expected to continue learning more sophisticated applications of these skills as they progress to grade level. The student outcome with vocabulary development is the process of learning vocabulary both directly and indirectly, with repetition and multiple exposures to vocabulary items. Learning in rich contexts, incidental learning, and use of computer technology enhance the acquiring of vocabulary.

E. Comprehension
It is imperative that the majority of text be expository. Text comprehension instruction should include both oral and written expressions that both support the intentional and thoughtful interaction between the reader and the text (Kamil, Pearson, Moje, Afflerbach, 2011). The student outcome with reading comprehension is to instill an active process that requires intentional thinking during which meaning is constructed through interactions between text and reader. Comprehension skills are taught explicitly by demonstrating, explaining, modeling, and implementing specific cognitive strategies to help beginning readers derive meaning through intentional, problem-solving thinking processes.

Instructional Aspects
- Materials used for instruction must be matched to the reading levels of the students in each tier. Appropriate **differentiated instructional materials** should be available at each level of intervention, including non-fiction text. Research supports a balance of fiction, non-fiction, and informational text in classroom libraries (Allington, 2002).
- Comprehension strategies should be explicitly taught across the tiers using the **gradual release of responsibility** model (i.e. greatest teacher modeling and support when introducing each skill, strong teacher support with large and then small group practice of skill, gradually leading to greater student independence, and eventually complete student independence in applying skill). Students at intervention levels II and III will need longer periods of teacher modeling and group practice than students in Intervention I and Core Instruction groups.
- Comprehension strategies and skills are presented using the **before-, during-, and after-reading model of strategic reading**. Before-reading strategies allow students to activate and build prior knowledge, set a reading purpose, and plan for reading. During-reading strategies promote active thinking to make meaning from text and support the purpose for reading. After-reading strategies require students to check for understanding, integrate and transfer learning, and synthesize new information.
- Teachers will employ a reading program in German in all aforementioned components of core instruction (grades K-2), and adding parallel programming in English starting at grade 3. The literacy block utilizes a **3-pillar approach of a well-defined curriculum, scientifically based instruction, and ongoing evaluation**.

PARENT COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT
Teachers have formal opportunities to communicate with parents three times a year. Parent teacher conferences are scheduled in November and March. Report Cards are sent in January and June. During the three formal opportunities teachers and parents discuss the identification of students either being at risk in literacy learning or not at-risk. Results from literacy

assessments given will be shared through these mediums. A formal statement will be included in the report card stating whether or not students met the learning targets identified by the assessment tools listed above. Parent permission is requested for more intensive intervention tiers.

Our school has an active Parent Teacher Organization. The TCGIS PTO is committed to supporting teachers as they go about the critical work of educating kids. The PTO helps with fundraising efforts, book sales, and provides multiple opportunities for parents to be involved with literacy activities at TCGIS.

Whole school involvement may include:
- Daily Diaries displayed either in classrooms or on websites that record the literacy skills, books and themes
- Curriculum Night at which time parents see, hear and participate in literacy activities
- Antolin German Literacy & Computer Support Program
- English annual book fair and family night
- Fundraising that supports literacy
- Guest Readers
- Library Day staffed by parents
- Volunteers with Guided Reading Groups
- Public performances of plays and musicals
- Poetry presentations
- Theme-based project presentations
- Reading Buddies across grade-levels
- Reading Night Sleepover
- Lesemarathon / Reading Marathon
- Themed Student Read-Alouds

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The ultimate purpose and outcome of effective professional learning is to increase student learning. Therefore, effective professional/staff development involves collaborative and reflective examinations of formative and summative assessments, including student work, to understand students' needs and interests related to rigorous academic learning including academic content standards.

Job-embedded professional development is a critical component for a successful implementation of any literacy plan. Professional development provides educators with opportunities to learn about new research and practices, including data management for optimizing student learning. These opportunities must be built into the regular school schedule to allow teachers to work cooperatively across grade levels and subjects, and to provide mentoring support to each other. Collaborative practices promote the development of meaningful data, intervention practices and instructional strategies. In 2019 a group of teacher leaders from TCGIS started the 2-year LETRS Course. Upon completion, they will share the literacy strategies and expertise from the program to the rest of the teaching community.

Teachers' knowledge of their students is an essential ingredient of successful teaching. Professional learning helps educators understand the general cognitive and social/emotional characteristics of students in order to provide developmentally appropriate curriculum and instruction. It helps teachers use knowledge of their students' interests and backgrounds to plan meaningful lessons for a continually changing student population. Professional development equips educators with ways of offering differentiated learning activities based on the unique strengths of each student.

Mentoring
Mentoring is part of our professional development plan. Because teaching is complex, it often takes years to learn to teach knowledgeably and skillfully. A mentor helps new teachers develop teaching skills for students needing 21st century learning and knowledge. Best practice in mentoring requires guidance to teachers in a job-embedded context, based on a thorough assessment of the teacher's strengths and needs. At TCGIS mentoring relationships are identified at the start of each school year.

The need for mentoring tends to vary depending on a teacher's background and experience. Required competencies and areas for growth can be addressed through peer coaching. They should include discussions about best practices in second language

learning, the use of student data to create appropriate lessons, attention to classroom organization, management of student behavior, curriculum development and implementation and utilization of parental support. Mentors help teachers who have mastered basic competencies deepen their understanding of teaching and learning processes, use their curricula and materials effectively and employ effective instructional strategies. For the more advanced teacher, mentoring can focus on exploring, applying, and analyzing the effectiveness of more sophisticated models of teaching and learning.

Informal arrangements with mentors are encouraged and supported. Novice teachers are given time to observe experienced teachers in the classroom. Teachers new to the country, especially, will benefit from the cultural orientation they can receive from a mentor, but even American-born and educated teachers new to a community will appreciate the help a mentor teacher will provide adjusting to the school and new location.

Curriculum Leadership
Curriculum Leadership for grades K-4 and grade 5-8 is provided through the Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and lead teachers who support other teachers in implementing the vision set by the Director, Board of Directors and teaching teams. The leadership team monitors vertical alignment between grade levels in preventing gaps and overlaps in the coverage of the K-8 State Standards, ensures consistency in our educational philosophy in modes of instruction including responsive classroom, immersion best practices, differentiation, consistent integration of formative and summative assessments and in documenting and communicating results of assessments. Additionally, a professional learning team meets regularly to plan in-house staff development, and supports teachers who want to attend external workshops and conferences.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
Twin Cities German Immersion School provides a structure for PLC as a major component to Professional development. PLCs are opportunities for team, department, and grade-level groups to plan lessons together, examine their students' work to find ways to improve it, observe one another teach, reflect on changes in instruction, and plan improvements based on various data.

Collaborative professional learning engages teachers in teams that work together during a dedicated timeframe to improve teaching and learning. Successful professional learning groups are characterized as follows:
1. **Support and shared leadership** by the School Director and the Curriculum Leadership Team are critical for success. They provide leadership by inviting staff input and action in decision making. Trust and community are fostered by creating an ongoing conversation with staff about best practices.
2. **Trust, collaboration, accountability, and autonomy.** Trust among professional learning community members is important for true collaboration and accountability. Collaborative groups work best when provided some autonomy.
3. **Begin with assessment of reality.** Which students are succeeding? Who is struggling? There are many forms of data that are useful for determining student learning, for example: student work, scores from standardized assessments, formative classroom assessments, and surveys. The courage to examine the present condition of student learning without judgment is crucial for planning the work of school-based professional learning communities.
4. **Focus on instruction**. There is an emerging consensus that professional development that has the highest impact focuses directly on instructional content and materials. The best approach is to have teachers who are designing and working with the same curriculum come together in collaborative groups to study what is working and what needs adjustment based on their students' work (data).
5. **Follow-up** for any instructional change decided on in a professional learning group is essential. This shared practice includes peer review of instructional practices and includes feedback and support. This can be accomplished through an open-door policy where colleagues move freely in and out of each other's classrooms or, through more formal peer observation with a specific objective. This process could also involve support from coaches. Follow-up includes reflection by the participants, individually and with colleagues, about the application of new insights, potential next steps for improvements and measures of success.
6. **Ongoing documentation and sharing of the work** among members of the professional learning communities are important. This sharing provides opportunities for staff to communicate about their successes and challenges, which makes the whole school smarter, builds community, and encourages accountability.

Workshops / Institute
A **Workshop** or **Institute** refers to the concentrated study of specific content over a short period of time. A workshop might last half a day or more while an institute generally covers a number of consecutive days. In this professional development model staff usually gain new knowledge about a topic by reading, discussing, and listening to experts. Participants might view demonstrations of the new knowledge and be allocated time to plan how they will integrate this new knowledge with their classroom instruction, administrative responsibilities, or other work. In various fields, including education, the study of learning

has resulted in an important distinction between the horizontal and vertical transfer of new knowledge. The difference between these two types of learning is based on complexity and familiarity, a distinction that is especially important when planning workshops.

Horizontal refers to the easy transfer of knowledge gained from a workshop to practice in the workplace. Workshops intended to facilitate horizontal transfer might focus on minor teaching skills where the participants already possess some knowledge and experience. Such horizontal workshops might be perfect as a vehicle for extending the learning of a practice or skill that is already familiar. The horizontal transfer of knowledge and skills can usually be accomplished in one or two sessions.

Vertical workshops or institutes are most appropriate when the sessions start the learning, but where implementation of the workshop learning requires additional professional skills. New learning for participants should be delivered in vertical workshops or institutes. Learning that lends itself to vertical transfer usually requires several sessions with time between sessions, accompanied by opportunities for implementation support at the site. The on-site support could take the form of coaching or collaboration on the topic in a professional learning community