



TWIN CITIES  
**German  
Immersion**  
SCHOOL

# Middle School Quarterly Newsblatt

*Innovative education of the whole child through German immersion.*

Der .29 September 2023

*Liebe TCGIS Gemeinschaft,*

This is the first Middle School newsletter of the 2023-2024 school year. The purpose of this publication is to provide communication to families for middle school academics, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities. In elementary school, teachers send out a weekly letter to families. In middle school, teachers will send out periodic newsletters to inform parents about a new unit or upcoming project, but the communication is not the same when you have 8 different teachers teaching the same student. This is intended to fill in the gaps.

Welcome 5th grade families. Welcome back 6th through 8th. We've got lots of fun things to look forward to in this next school year. Waldsee and Capstone are back for the second year after the pandemic. There is a robust athletics program. We have at least 2 dances planned. It's going to be a great year!

See you on Wednesday starting at 6:30 for our Middle School Curriculum night. We will run families through their children's schedules.

*mit freundlichen Grüßen,*

*~Elizabeth Zehnpfennig, Principal*

*ezehpennig@tcgis.org*



## **Hot Topics in Technology**

**How do I know how my kids are doing? How do I know what homework my kid has?**

As the school year gets underway, we want to help TCGIS families stay informed about what is happening in the classroom and the academic progress of their children. While the specifics may look different per grade level, there are some important resources and procedures that we want you to know about to best support your child(ren).

### **Infinite Campus**

TCGIS uses [Infinite Campus](#) as a way to organize student information and communicate between teachers, families, students, and school staff. This is where our school tracks attendance, grades, health information, contact details, etc.

### **Student Planners**

Checking Infinite Campus is the best way for you to stay up to date with how your child is doing in class, but it is not our only system for tracking information and supporting students. We also strongly encourage students to use a daily planner in order to track assignments, important due dates, and school events. In addition to Infinite Campus, checking your child's planner is a great way to keep up to date with their academic progress.

### **Google Classroom**

Google Classroom is a tool that teachers use to organize and present information to students and is primarily a student-facing resource. It is here that students access

content for projects, assignments, and links to resources. Different teachers will have a different balance of how much of their course content is presented to students on Google Classroom. Some of your child's work may only exist in paper copy.

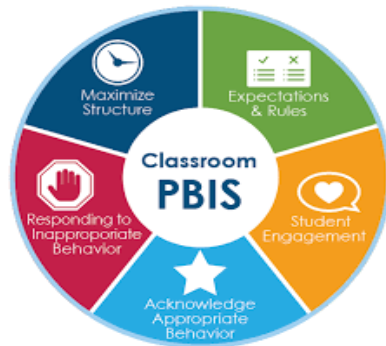
We encourage families with an interest in learning more about the structure and content of each of your child's classes to join us on Wednesday, October 4th for our Middle School Curriculum Night. Here teachers will be presenting and taking questions on how you can best support your child with the work in their class.

### **What are the rules around Chromebooks and middle school tech tools?**

Chromebooks are an exciting part of middle school. We will follow the same plan as last year. Here are some details:

- **5th and 6th graders** will keep their Chromebooks in carts and grab them every morning and stow them after the last period. They do **not** bring them home.
- As a result of keeping Chromebooks at school, when work is assigned on them, the expectation is that kids will do it at school. If they are telling you that there is work to do on a device at home, check with the teacher to see what might be going on.
- **7th and 8th graders**, in a system that is concurrent with the increased responsibility that comes with these grades, **do** get to take theirs home.
- There will be work assigned for students to do on their Chromebooks.
- **7th and 8th graders** were issued chargers to go home with these devices.
- Please help your student create a routine around charging these devices.
- Students will be the only person to touch their computers.
- All teachers will be using Google Classroom as our Learning Management System.

With Chromebooks came the [responsible tech agreement](#) that families and students signed. We have come up with a list of consequences for students who are having trouble following our Responsible Tech Agreement. **Chromebooks are a privilege that can be removed if expectations are not met.**



## **PBIS Ecke**

### What is PBIS?

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>

### Reinforcing Expected Behavior & 6-8 School Store

One way we acknowledge appropriate behavior in all grades K-8 is by giving Mausmunzen to students. These are earned "tickets" that are entered into school drawings for prizes. This year, in grades 6-8 we will be opening a School Store for students to spend earned Mausmunzen. If you are able to support our PBIS program, please visit Infinite Campus to make a donation. Catherine Radecki is also collecting items (notebooks, markers, pens, fidgets, water bottle stickers) for the School Store in the front office. Thank you in advance for your contributions!



## First Middle School Dance of the Year

Our first dance of the year will be **Friday, October 27th**. 5th and 6th graders will have their dance from **6:00-7:15**. 7th and 8th graders will have their dance from **7:30-9:00**. Tickets will be available on Infinite Campus for \$5.00 beginning next Friday, October 6th. Snacks will be for sale by our Capstone students so students can bring a few dollars to buy a drink or treat.

Costumes are allowed and encouraged but must adhere to the same costume policies that we have at school.

Please keep in mind the following guidance from the TCGIS Dress Code in the Family Handbook:

- 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
- Students must be able to get into and out of their costumes without help during the day for bathroom use,
- **Most relevant to Halloween costumes:** costumes may not include weapons, or masks that cover the entire face. *Vielen Dank!*



## Sportecke

Here is the [Sportecke](#) for this season. You can also check out our Athletics website our home page under [TCGIS Athletics](#). We are adding our Math-letes to this section as well. So click on the article to read about Fall Sports and Math Team!

As a reminder, finances should not be a factor in deciding to participate in TCGIS athletic teams. If finances are a concern, please contact Coach Tabisz **BEFORE** registering because payment is required at the time of registration.

With questions, please contact [Athletic Coordinator Tabisz](#)



## **Capstone Corner**

### **Class of 2024:**

We said “wir sehen uns” to our Capstone friends this week. Our three visiting schools of teachers and students left for Germany on Thursday. There wasn’t a dry eye in the house! We can’t wait to see our friends again in Spring.

We will have a parent meeting soon once we have time to process that this half of the exchange is over! Thanks for all of your help, support, and encouragement. Thanks to anyone who hosted and thanks to the parents who volunteered to help chaperone. This is an enormous undertaking for our school. Thanks to Dani Nicholson, Katharina Schirg, and Esther Neu. They are rock stars!

### **Class of 2025:**

This class is on deck. We will have our first Capstone meeting to discuss the Class of 2025’s Capstone trip. The meeting is in person after the curriculum night on October 4th in the cafeteria. We will begin our meeting at 8 pm. Students are encouraged to attend.



