



2009 - 2010



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Mission

The German Immersion Foundation supports the Milwaukee German Immersion School (MGIS) and the Milwaukee School of Languages (MSL) by providing the additional resources to fully fund programs needed to prepare children to excel in the competitive global marketplace.

Story

The parents saw the writing on the wall. After several consecutive years of budget cutbacks for their children's school, they decided to take action. A handful of committed parents joined together in 2001 to form the German Immersion Foundation, an entity that would raise funds to support two Milwaukee education treasures - MGIS and MSL. The foundation exists to ensure the high quality of these two Milwaukee Public Schools, where student test scores rival those of students from the top performing school districts and private schools.

Although the foundation funds cannot be used to support school operations, the foundation has been instrumental in funding crucial professional development for teachers, much needed equipment in the classrooms, and intern programs that bring native German speakers to the classrooms as part-time aides.

These initiatives enable the schools to maintain their high quality, and focus their budgets on employing high-caliber staff. The foundation is led by a board composed of parents of current and former students, staff members from both schools and committed community partners.

The Full Immersion Concept

Full language immersion is an approach to instruction in which the usual curricular activities are conducted in a foreign language. Students acquire the necessary language skills to understand and communicate about the subject matter set out in the schools' program of instruction. They follow the same curricula, and in some instances, use the same materials (translated into German) as those used in the non-foreign language immersion schools of their district. In other words, German is both the subject of instruction and the medium through which a majority of the school's academic content is taught.

At MGIS, students receive reading, language arts, mathematics, social studies and science instruction in German from the first day of Kindergarten through the fifth grade. In second grade, students are introduced to 30 minutes per day of English reading instruction. The amount of English is increased to approximately one and one-half hours per day at the fourth and fifth grade levels. By the time they complete Kindergarten, students are fluent in German and English. By the time they complete elementary school, they are fully bilingual in reading, writing and speaking having received 5,200 hours of instruction in German. By the time they finish high school at MSL, they have earned 16 college credits in German language.

Vision for the Future

As one of only a few foundations in America established to support a public school, the German Immersion Foundation strives to maintain the high quality of education received at MGIS and MSL so that:

- Graduates of the immersion program receive the Deutsches Sprachdiplom, the German Language Diploma.
- MGIS and MSL have waiting lists for admission year after year and facilities expansion have been completed.
- Teachers and administrators are asked to develop blueprints for similar programs in other metro areas.
- The foundation becomes a model of support and partnership for quality education in the United States.

School Achievements

- MSL was recognized as 2009 Global Classroom Award winner by the Council on Standards for International Educational Travel (CSIET).
- MGIS was recognized as a Deutsche Partnerschule by the German government.
- MSL was rated in the top 1,000 public high schools in the United States by Newsweek Magazine.
- 90% of MGIS 4th grade students are proficient or advanced in reading.
- Students graduating from the MGIS program have a 100% high school graduation rate compared to 62% state average for public schools.
- MGIS is a Blue Ribbon Excellence Award Winning School.

Recent Funding Initiatives

- The Foundation provided \$37,000 for the Amity Internship program since 2004. Each of the three interns in 2008/2009 provided 875 hours of native German instruction to assist teachers at MGIS and MSL.
- The Foundation provided \$39,000 in grants for new technologies in MGIS and MSL.
- The Foundation provided \$25,000 in grants for curriculum development at MGIS and MSL.
- The Foundation provided \$28,000 in grants for professional development.
- The Foundation provided \$4,000 in college scholarships.

Goals

- During the 2009/2010 school year, collaboratively identify and prioritize needs for each school.
- Raise grants and sponsorship receipts totaling at least \$20,000 for the 2009/2010 school year.
- Expand the Amity Program by adding one intern position for the 2010/2011 school year.
- Increase the 2010 silent auction attendance by 10%.
- Find a space by 2015 for meetings, storage and facilitation of volunteer efforts.

How You Can Help

- **Attend or sponsor** our Annual Silent Auction Fundraiser.
- **Sponsor** an Amity Intern for \$4,500 or be a host family.
- **Help** a teacher defray the cost of professional development for \$750. Many of these opportunities take place in Germany.
- **Volunteer** your time and talent to either MGIS or MSL.
- **Donate** art, music, gym, or school supplies to the schools.
- **Serve** as a board or committee member for the Foundation.
- **Visit** the schools to witness the unique immersion approach to education and its proven results.