

Regular Meeting of the Yinghua Academy School Board
1616 Buchanan St. NE, Minneapolis, School Library
Monday, March 7, 2011, 6:00 pm
final

Board Members in Attendance

Maryann Choy (Secretary), Scott Jax, Taoyuan Li, Cindy Moeller, Keri Norell, Doug Parish (Treasurer), Abigail Pribbenow (Chair), Jen Shadowens, Kristin Swenson, Ben Weng

Academic Director and Interim Executive Director in Attendance

Dr. Luyi Lien, Ursina Swanson

YACA Liaison

Alison Parks

Public in Attendance

Alexandra Woods, Kirt Schaper, Becky Hoffman (parents) attended the meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Pribbenow called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

The MOTION by Ms. Swenson to approve the agenda with changes, was seconded and passed.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

IV. BOARD APPROVALS

A. Minutes from Regular Meeting of the School Board, February 17, 2011

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve the February 17, 2011 minutes with changes, was seconded and passed.

B. Conflict of Interest

In accordance with Yinghua Academy Bylaws, **Article IV, Section 12**, approved on 17 February 2011, and consistent with Minn. Stat. 124 D.10 and federal law, each Board member affirmed understanding and agreement to the following.

Each director must state that he or she has no conflicts of interest, as follows:

1. An individual director is prohibited from serving as a member of the board if the individual, an immediate family member, or the individual's partner is an owner, employee or agent of, or a contractor with a for-profit or nonprofit entity with whom the school contracts, directly or indirectly, for professional services, goods or facilities.
2. The school may not enter into a contract with a director, a director-related organization, an organization of which the director is a director, officer or legal representative, employee, or with any other entity with which the employee may have a material financial interest.

3. No member of the board may participate in the selecting, awarding or administering of a contract if a conflict exists
4. The interested director may be present at a meeting to answer questions but shall exit for discussion and vote.
5. Employees and board members of the authorizer are ineligible to serve on the board.

Maryann Choy stated no conflict of interest.

Scott Jax stated no conflict of interest.

Dr. Taoyuan Li stated no conflict of interest.

Cindy Moeller stated no conflict of interest.

Keri Norell stated no conflict of interest.

Doug Parish stated no conflict of interest.

Abigail Pribbenow stated no conflict of interest.

Jen Shadowens stated no conflict of interest.

Kristin Swenson stated no conflict of interest.

Ben Weng stated no conflict of interest.

Dr. Luyi Lien stated no conflict of interest.

Ursina Swanson stated no conflict of interest.

C. Set Dates on Current Calendar

1. Ms. Pribbenow recommended we change the format of the Annual meeting given the low attendance of last year's annual meeting that was a potluck held on a Sunday at the end of the school year.

The MOTION by to Dr. Li to combine the June 6, 2011 Board meeting with the Annual meeting, was seconded and passed.

The MOTION by Ms. Swenson to close the Board election on June 8, 2011 and publish election results before the last day of school, June 10, 2011 was seconded and passed.

2. Ms. Pribbenow presented other possible strategic planning dates.

V. INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

- A. Ms. Swanson acknowledged Yinghua's hardworking Board and now, understands and appreciates this, as how a charter school gets its work done.
- B. There continues to be strong interest in Yinghua Academy as many school tours are given each week.
- C. Talking with appropriate stakeholders, including CSDC on Facilities plans. Ms. Swanson will include facilities plans in the next staff meeting.
- D. Parent volunteers want to help with creating a pleasant staff lunch room.
- E. Five families have not met the deadline to submit application forms, including two current Yinghua families. Yinghua's enrollment needs to be simplified. If deadlines are not enforced, then why have deadlines? The application packet does not have to be so complex. Ms. Shadowens will work with Administration to simplify the enrollment process. The Board agreed with Administration to extend the deadline by one week by following up with a letter and a direct phone call.

F. Ms. Swanson presented a draft of 2011-12 school calendar. The school start date needs to be approved. The details of the calendar and the start / end time of the school day can be discussed later. Ms. Swanson would like to use the early morning hours as research shows these hours are best for learning. Bus schedules and traffic congestion needs to be considered.

The MOTION by Mr. Jax to start the next school year on Sept 6, 2011 was seconded and passed.

VI. ACADEMIC DIRECTOR REPORT

Dr. Lien presented the Academic Director's report, highlighting the Chinese New Year report.

1. Establishing a Chinese New Year committee to coordinate the event is extremely helpful.
2. Every student needs to participate. The whole celebrating as one community emphasizes the traditional Chinese idea of togetherness.
3. Program will be shortened to 1.5 hours total.
4. Continue to integrate lessons into the performance. Teachers will focus on the academic part. Each grade will have a different experience.
5. Ms. Moeller suggested making the 8th grade experience special as a celebration to their graduating year.
6. Other space options are being considered for the program.

VII. DISCUSSION

A. Employee Compensation and Benefits

Ms. Swenson, Dr. Lien and Ms. Swanson are looking at different compensation systems and reviewing at competitor's contract. The goal is to present letters of employment before Spring Break, March 18, 2011. There will be a need to have special meeting.

The MOTION by Ms. Swenson to schedule a Special Board meeting on March 14 at 6pm to approve salary and benefit structure, PTO and teacher work days was seconded and passed.

B. Strategic Planning

Ms. Swenson presented the Prouty Project proposal. By working backwards with a goal of having a one page strategic plan completed by June, the timeline becomes aggressive. The focus will be towards strategic thinking versus a drawn out year long process.

Ms. Pribbenow and Ms. Swenson will be meeting with Team Works on March 22, 2011. Team Works have facilitated many metro districts and tend to do more demographic work for re-districting. NOVA has used TeamWorks and they will contact NOVA as a reference. Ms. Swenson will ask these consultants for a sample of their output and distribute samples to the Board.

C. Yinghua Academy Foundation

Ms. DeGeest's draft of YAF application is being reviewed. Final review will be made by Ms. Topoluk. This application needs to be approved by year end, December 31, 2011 because funds have already been received from the Lantern Festival.

Several volunteers visited Park Spanish Immersion school (PSI). YACA is having meeting tomorrow to review new priorities and learnings from PSI. Discussion has started on weighing the cost-benefits of combining YAF with our parent organization. Currently, the YAF application is written as a separate entity.

VIII. SCHOOL BOARD REPORTS

A. Committees

1. Facilities, Scott Jax, Committee Chair
 - a) Mr. Jax presented the U+B proposal for feasibility and pricing for selective remodel. The proposal is being reviewed with CSDC, as CSDC is the owner of the facility. Mr. Jax is waiting on CSDC's approval to move forward. The cost for this proposal will be rolled into CSDC's facilities expansion costs.
 - b) Mr. Jax continues to develop other contingency plans.
2. Marketing, Jen Shadowens, Committee Chair
 - a) Ms. Shadowens has not heard back from Treefort on individual classroom password protected pages. For now, Ms. Shadowens will set up a universal password for the teachers to create their pages.
 - b) Ms. Shadowens posted information about the teacher training summer program on the website.
 - c) Ms. Shadowens drafted a 3-5 year strategic plan based on Board discussions solely for the purpose of fulfilling a requirement on the Honda grant application, a \$25K-100K grant. The Board will review and approve this draft at the Special meeting, March 14, 2011.
3. Nominating -
 - a) Ms. Pribbenow will ask Ms. Calcaterra to report Nominating Committee status at the April meeting.
 - b) Prouty Project recommended to include all Board candidates at the strategic planning meetings to keep them informed and part of the process.
 - c) The Board discussed the number of Board seats available for 2011-12.

The MOTION by Dr. Li to open four seats for 2011-12 was, seconded and passed.

I. ADJOURN

The MOTION by Ms. Swenson to adjourn at 8:09 .PM was, seconded and passed.

Minutes drafted by MaryAnn Choy, Board Secretary

Approved by vote of Board on: April 4, 2011