

**Regular Meeting of the Yinghua Academy School Board
1616 Buchanan St. NE, Minneapolis, School Library**

Monday, April 4, 2011, 6:00 pm

final

Board Members in Attendance

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

Board Members Not in Attendance

Dr. Ben Weng

Academic Director and Interim Executive Director in Attendance

Dr. Luyi Lien, Ursina Swanson

YACA Liaison

Alison Parks

Public in Attendance

Sarah H. (teacher), Becky H., Calvin S., Kirsten H., Rachel W., Megan M., Kirt S., Ruth S. (parents), Karen C. (parent / staff) attended the meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

The MOTION by Mr. Jax to approve the proposed agenda with a change, was seconded and passed.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

The public chose not to comment.

IV. YACA REPORT

Ms. Parks announced that the Yinghua Academy Foundation, the fund-raising arm of the school will now fall under YACA. This decision was made after in-depth discussions with Ms. Pribbenow, Ms. DeGeest and the YACA Board. The 501c application will be revised to include fundraising and YACA programming.

YACA will make a change in their leadership transition, whereby, next year, Ana Ly will be appointed YACA Board Chair and Coley Murphy will assume Secretary position. Ms. Ly will stand for re-election, as her term expires this year.

V. REPORT ON IMMERSION HIGH SCHOOL

Ms. Walker reported to the Board that a small group of immersion leaders met a couple of times to discuss the feasibility of creating an immersion high school. They are at the very early stage of discussion but the next step is to become more established. There is no direction yet on whether this school would be a charter school or part of a district. They are hoping to find funding to hire a person that would be dedicated to managing start-up issues. Ms. Walker invites board members and others to contact her with questions and comments. She will continue to forward pertinent information to the Board as it develops.

VI. BOARD APPROVALS

A. Minutes from Regular Meeting of the School Board, March 7, 2011

The MOTION by Ms. Shadowens to approve the March 7, 2011 minutes with changes, was seconded and passed.

B. Minutes from Special Meeting of the School Board, March 14, 2011

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve the March 14, 2011 minutes from the Special meeting, with changes, was seconded and passed.

C. 2011-2012 School Calendar

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve the school calendar with the following changes, was seconded and passed:

- **Change the name of the calendar to “Yinghua Academy Calendar 2011-12”**
- **K conferences on both September 6 and 7**
- **Change Immersion Information/Open House from January 28 to January 21**
- **Add “Lantern Festival Gala” on February 4**
- **Add “Academic Performances” on June 1**
- **Add “Field Day” on June 8**

VII. INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Swanson submitted a written report to the Board. Highlights include:

1. All of the 6th graders who applied for the dual track were personally notified that this program is not being offered due to insufficient enrollment.
2. 25 students for the added K section are being notified. 16 have accepted to date.
3. To meet a FLAP grant goal, Yinghua will offer an after-school, Chinese class for Middle School students at the end of April. Many of the 6th grade dual track applicants are interested in participating.
4. Employment letters were given to teachers by March 15. Ms. Swanson worked with Ms. Swenson to develop a fair and equal salary structure, and it was well received by the teachers.

5. Ms. Swenson acknowledged Ms. Swanson's help with the hiring process. Ms. Swanson initiated a very thorough interview process that brings Yinghua's hiring process to a very high level.
6. Many front office operations need to be adjusted and improved. PowerSchool has been underutilized. A lot of work is needed to review and organize the school records, and this will be done off-hours, since Ms. Andrews manages both the reception and health office. Mr. Parish asked Ms. Swanson to present a timeline of when these tasks will be completed, particularly those relating to compliance.
7. MCA training is complete. Ms. Swanson will visit each class to emphasize to the students the importance of doing their very best on the MCA tests.
8. Ms. Swanson thanks Ms. Shadowens and Mr. Chu for implementing the classroom web pages. A phased schedule is used, where Middle School pages will be launched first, then K-2 and 3-5th grades after MCA testing.
9. Ms. Swanson would like to offer a position to a stellar candidate that has music / orchestra / choir experience and also plays a Chinese instrument (erhu). She would complement the Music department by offering Middle School orchestra and choir electives. If Yinghua were to offer orchestra, Ms. Henning cautioned that other costs for chairs, stands, instruments, etc. need to be considered. Mr. Parish said such a position would likely fit within the school's staffing budget.
10. The Enrollment Policy needs revision to clarify details of the enrollment process and to define parameters.

VIII. ACADEMIC DIRECTOR REPORT

Dr. Lien submitted a written report to the Board. Highlights include:

1. We had a 98% attendance rate for parent-teacher conferences.
2. Q-Comp reports and a Budget Report for Confucius Institute were submitted.
3. A third video conference with our sister school was held on March 31. The sister school experienced problems with insufficient hardware.
4. Two Illinois school districts toured Yinghua and plan to start a Chinese immersion program in 2011-12.
5. Dr. Lien and Ms. Swanson visited Richfield Dual Language School and Wilshire Park School, a STEM school to understand their programs.
6. MCA, SOPA and YCT testing are scheduled for this Spring.
7. Dr. Lien is looking to hire someone for early intervention and remediation in Chinese language for new and current students and what we can do for those students.

IX. DISCUSSION

A. Strategic Planning - Approve a Facilitator

1. The Board discussed Team Works and Prouty Project proposals.

The MOTION by Ms. Moeller to approve the Prouty Project proposal to facilitate Yinghua Academy's Strategic planning effort, was seconded and passed unanimously.

B. Elections / Nominating

Ms. Calcaterra, member of the Nominating Committee reviewed the School Board's election process.

1. 60 days prior to Elections, a letter is sent to the community describing the process.
2. 30 days prior, a letter with names of the candidates is sent to the community.
3. Ballots are sent 15 days prior to Elections. A short biography is due by May 5th for website posting. Anyone may run for the Board. The skills listed in the letter from the Nominating Committee are areas of need, but candidates do not necessarily need to demonstrate experience in these areas
4. Candidates are encouraged to attend a Board meeting.
5. The Board asked the Nominating Committee to give candidates a realistic idea of the time commitment necessary for serving on the Board as although it seems we are making significant progress, the next 12 months will require a similar, high workload.

X. SCHOOL BOARD REPORTS

A. Chair

Ms. Pribbenow reported.

1. Continuing to work on the 501c process which will rename the foundation under the YACA PTO organization.
2. To date, \$30,000 has been received for Red Envelope, cash on CNY and GiveMN. This does not include the estimated \$20,000 raised from the Gala.
3. Need to host town-hall meetings to address questions about our facility expansion, strategic planning process and the transition of the foundation with YACA. Possibly, we can use YACA's May 18th General meeting.

B. Treasurer

Mr. Parish distributed February's Financial Statements to the Board. He highlighted the following:

1. Fund balance has increased by \$325,000 during the current fiscal year. Cash flow remains constrained due to the State holdback.
2. Local revenues, donations, gifts and fundraising was budgeted at \$74,000. We have collected \$49,500 as of the end of February.
3. Expenditures in excess were discussed at last Board meeting, where dues and membership overage is from our sponsor's per pupil rate, instructional supplies and other rentals are from our copying expense.

C. Committees

1. Personnel, Kristin Swenson, Committee Chair. Ms. Swenson acknowledged Ms. Swenson for all her time and work in giving fairness and equity into the teacher salary structure. The task was exceptionally hard because the salaries were not standardized. Paid Time Off was not where it should have

been. Ms. Swenson also wanted to thank Dr. Lien and Ms. Swanson for meeting with each teacher during the already busy period of parent-teacher conferences. It showed importance and how much we value our teachers. This was the first time Yinghua provided offer letters to teachers before Spring Break.

2. Facilities, Scott Jax, Committee Chair
 - a) Mr. Jax said CSDC accounting for summer 2010 building renovations has finally been closed and CSDC can now begin to look at Yinghua's future facility expansion.
 - b) On March 11, CSDC approved Yinghua's expansion plan, to go forward to accommodate the increased enrollment for next year. CSDC wants to use Bouma Construction for this expansion. Bouma Construction is working on another CSDC project in the Twin Cities and would like to tour Yinghua.
 - c) Facilities Committee meeting is scheduled this Thursday; Karl Jentoft, CSDC will attend.
3. Marketing, Jen Shadowens, Committee Chair
 - a) Ms. Shadowens said Treefort is able to provide individual passwords for the Classroom pages and it will cost \$1000. A plug-in, at no cost, is being used for photos.
 - b) Ms. Shadowens will follow up on if a separate Board letterhead is needed.

I. ADJOURN

The MOTION by Mr. Jax to adjourn at 8:40 PM was, seconded and passed.

Minutes drafted by MaryAnn Choy, Board Secretary

Approved by vote of Board on: April 25, 2011