

# Student and Family Handbook



**2011-2012**

District 4140

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## **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

The following Handbook is intended to serve as an informative guide for families regarding school policies and procedures; as such, it does not encompass every situation or circumstance, but rather serves as a reference for principles and expectations.

### **Welcome to Yinghua Academy!**

As the first school of its kind in the country, Yinghua Academy is recognized as a national leader in Mandarin Chinese immersion education. Yinghua Academy is a bilingual, tuition-free, public charter school with a global perspective.

At Yinghua Academy, we strive for excellence in education, respect for diversity, and strength of character. We provide a rigorous academic program centered in language immersion and cultural literacy. Our caring and dedicated faculty, staff and administration work together with our parents, community partners and school Board to create a safe, respectful, rigorous and enjoyable learning environment for our students.

### **Yinghua Academy's Mission Statement**

The mission of Yinghua Academy is to prepare our students to be engaged and productive global citizens by providing a research-based educational program that includes a rigorous academic program, immersion in Chinese language and culture, and a nurturing and supportive school environment.

### **The Four Principles of Yinghua Academy**

Every day, students are reminded of the four core principles of Yinghua Academy. These four principles motivate and guide our actions and provide the foundation and framework that sustain the educational environment at our school.

**安全**- Safety

**我说中文** – Speak Chinese

**学习**- Learn

**快乐**- Happiness

## **What is a charter school?**

Charter schools are independent public schools that are part of the state's public school system, but operate independently of the traditional school district in which they are located.

Each charter school has its own governing Board. Typically, the founding Board is a group of parents, teachers, and community members who come together to create a school with a particular focus (e.g., language, arts, math and science) or specific educational philosophy or approach to teaching (e.g., Montessori, classical education, project-based learning).

After the school is operational, the school community (parents and staff) selects members to serve on the school's governing Board. According to Minnesota law, at the end of its third year of operation, a charter school must have a fully-elected Board. For more information on charter schools, visit the Center for School Change at [www.centerforschoolchange.org](http://www.centerforschoolchange.org), and the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools at [www.mncharterschools.org](http://www.mncharterschools.org).

## **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors is the elected governing body of Yinghua Academy. The primary responsibilities of the Board are to develop the vision and mission of the school; to select, support, and evaluate a chief executive; to ensure effective planning; to set policy that will ensure the school's ongoing viability; and to oversee the monthly and long-term financial management of the school. The Board of Directors consists of up to 11 members who are elected by the parents and staff of the school. The Board consists of accomplished people who represent one or more of the following constituencies: Yinghua staff, educator, or administrator; Yinghua parent, community member. Yinghua's bylaws require that it have at least one person from each of these three groups on the Board at all times.

All Board members must chair or serve on at least one committee. In accordance with school by-laws, committees do not have decision-making authority. Rather, these active working groups conduct research and make recommendations to the School Board at regular meetings of the Board. Committee chairs are encouraged to recruit members from the Yinghua parent and teacher community and from time to time may also recruit from outside the Yinghua community if special skills or expertise are needed. Committee meetings are open to the public in accordance with the Minnesota Open Meeting Law and as outlined in the Yinghua Academy by-laws.

The Board of Directors meets approximately every 3 weeks, at 6:00 pm at school. Meetings are open to the public, and a public comment period is offered at each regular meeting of the School Board. Those who wish to make a comment must sign up at the meeting. Regular meetings of the School Board are listed on the school's master calendar. In the

event of a Special Meeting, a 72-hour notice will be posted on the bulletin board of the school (required by law), and, if possible, on the website as a courtesy to parents. There is typically no public comment period at a special meeting.

Parents, staff and community members are encouraged to run for seats on the Board of Directors. Each member is elected to a 3-year term, and as such, only a few seats are up for election each year. This provides stability and continuity for the Board. Elections are held annually in June. A call for candidates will be sent home in the spring.

## **Yinghua Academy Community Association**

“YACA” is the acronym for the Yinghua Academy Community Association. YACA is the parent group of Yinghua Academy and functions similarly to a PTO or PTA organization at other public schools. The YACA mission statement reads: *“Supporting the mission of Yinghua Academy, its students, teachers and staff by providing volunteers, fundraising and assistance in cooperation with the Executive Director and the Board of Directors.”* All parents and guardians of current Yinghua students are considered “general members” of YACA. YACA is led by a Board, which consists of nine elected members, and meets monthly. Additionally, about three times during the school year, general membership meetings are held and are open to all Yinghua parents. Every parent is welcome to get involved to help keep Yinghua strong.

Yinghua Academy greatly appreciates volunteer support. If you would like to volunteer, please email the Volunteer Coordinator, Rachel Collins, your availability and interests at [volunteer@yinghuaacademy.org](mailto:volunteer@yinghuaacademy.org). We need volunteers for recess periods, fieldtrips and special events, and office support throughout the year. We also appreciate the help of licensed teachers to volunteer with substituting and tutoring. Volunteers should be aware of and willing to help all students. The time commitments for volunteer opportunities vary: we ask that volunteers arrive promptly and stay for the entire scheduled time. Volunteering at Yinghua is contingent on the successful completion of a background check. Background checks forms can be found on the school website and in the Main Office and must be accompanied by a \$20 payment (Per state law, the school cannot pay for volunteer background checks).

For information about YACA, including Board minutes, please see the Yinghua Academy website. For further information, contact Ana Ly at [lyxxx009@umn.edu](mailto:lyxxx009@umn.edu).

## **Partnership Between Parents and Yinghua Academy**

### *The Administration commits to:*

- Creating an organized, safe and supportive environment for students, teachers and parents.
- Managing school operations responsibly to ensure continued progress and success.
- Maintaining a program rooted in Chinese immersion language and culture learning, and rigorous academics for all students.

### *The Teachers commit to:*

- Partnering with parents in the academic progress and behavioral growth of their children.
- Planning and delivering instruction that captures the interest and meets the need of every student.
- Demonstrating genuine concern and respect for each student, family and staff member.
- Managing classrooms and teaching the immersion language curriculum.
- Responding to behavioral situations in a calm, clear, consistent manner, using the Responsive Classroom approach.

### *The parents commit to:*

- Ensuring my child(ren) eats healthy food, sleeps adequately, and exercises regularly.
- Assuring my child's prompt attendance and contacting the school when s/he is tardy or absent.
- Requesting and completing the necessary paperwork if my child requires medication at school.
- Ensuring the contact information on my child's emergency card is complete and up-to-date.
- Ensuring homework is completed and returned to school.
- Reading to/with my child daily in English and Chinese or providing an opportunity for my child to read independently.
- Supporting the school's mission of Chinese language learning
- Attending parent-teacher conferences and addressing any concerns with my child's teachers.
- Abide by all school policies and trust in the faculty, staff and administration of the school.

## **Office and School Hours**

The office is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 am – 4:30 pm. The school day is from 8:30 am – 3:20 pm. Students not at school by 8:30 am are considered tardy. Students can be dropped

off as early as 7:50 am and picked up as late as 4:10 pm. Students dropped off earlier or picked up later are sent to the fee-based Yinghua Care program.

## **Records, Fees and Bill Requests**

Parents or guardians may view their child's permanent school record at any time. Please give the school a one-day notice so that the appropriate records can be prepared. The record may be viewed in the presence of the Executive Director or Academic Director. To read the entire Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records Policy, go to [www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies).

There may be occasions when Yinghua Academy finds it necessary to charge families fees; examples of these instances include lost materials, late payments, damaged equipment, additional educational services, or extra-curricular opportunities such as field trips.

Yinghua Care bills can be used for IRS documentation and pre-tax childcare expense accounts. Please provide a two-week notice for year-end summary statements. Statements are available for free in January and July; otherwise, a \$5 processing fee is assessed.

## **Educational Benefits for Families Displaying Economic Need**

Yinghua Academy is passionate about educating all children, regardless of socio-economic status. In order to provide the same quality educational experience to every student, Yinghua Academy participates in the National Food and Lunch Program which provides free and reduced lunches to qualifying students. Families who qualify for free or reduced lunches also receive discounted Yinghua Care and Enrichment Program rates.

To apply for Educational Benefits, please complete the application which is sent to all families in July. Copies of the application can also be picked up in the school office, and the application is available in several languages on the MN Department of Education website. Please contact the Main Office if you have any questions about these programs.

**In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.** Yinghua Academy takes seriously any and all claims of harassment and will respond accordingly. To read the entire Equal Education Opportunity Policy, go to [www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies).

# HEALTH & SAFETY

## Lunches and Snacks

Yinghua Academy provides a hot lunch program with healthy food choices. The hot lunch meal is \$3.50 (including the price of milk) and milk is \$.50.

To order hot lunch for students, we ask parents to please follow the procedures below:

- Review and download the menu from [www.yinghuaacademy.org](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org) under the “Current Families” link.
- Fill out the student’s name, grade and teacher’s name.
- Check mark (  ) only the days that the students will have hot lunches or milk from the school. Please note that milk is already included as part of hot lunch.
- Please return the form to the classroom or main office promptly by the **deadline**. If the form is not returned by the deadline, we’ll assume the students will bring their lunches from home for the entire month.
- The school will assume that students will eat the hot lunch they ordered, and for which they will be charged unless we are notified at least a week prior that they will not be taking the lunch. (Unless they are absent for illness).
- If a student forgets to bring a lunch on a day that they did not sign up for, we will provide a cheese sandwich, carrots/fruit and milk as an alternative meal, and the account will be charged.

Bag lunches can be ordered for class field trips. These meals must be ordered two weeks in advance. They are \$3.50 each and contain a sandwich, fruit, vegetable option, and milk.

Snacks times are incorporated into each day. We rely on parents and students to help provide healthy, nutritional classroom snacks. Some classrooms assign a snack calendar in which each family is responsible for providing the entire class with a snack for that day. Please note on the snack calendar that if parents send a snack which requires utensils (such as yogurt needing spoons), the parents must supply these as well—classrooms may not use cafeteria utensils or supplies for snack time.

For reasons of nutritional health and student safety, snacks must be store bought and cannot have sugar or corn syrup listed in the first three ingredients. As is the case with lunches, **we do not allow any snacks with peanuts**. Parents are also asked to avoid other nuts as well as sesame. Examples of good snack options include pretzels, granola, and dried fruit. Fresh and healthy foods such as cheese and crackers, vegetables and fruit are encouraged.

***We strive to be an environment without peanuts. However, sometimes unbeknown to the school, a student will bring in a peanut butter sandwich for lunch. The lunchroom will have a separate, peanut-free table, where students with severe peanut allergies may eat their lunch.***

## **Illness and Injury**

Yinghua Academy makes every effort to promote the general health and well being of all students while minimizing absences and missed learning time. Staff members are trained in first aid, and students receive care consistent with the severity of the illness or injury. School office staff will provide routine first aid and check the health of students exhibiting symptoms or complaining of illness or injury. The School Nurse is contracted in the event of more serious illness or injury. All Yinghua staff are responsible for promoting a safe learning and playing environment, and minimizing the possibility for student illness and injury.

Staff members receive additional training and are expected to be sensitive and prepared if any of their students require special medications or accommodations such as inhalers, Epi-Pens or have other health issues that require more or regular care. Parents should bring special health problems to the attention of the classroom teacher and office personnel. It is imperative a parent or guardian be available and prepared to pick up their child in the event of a more serious illness or injury. An ill or injured student must be picked up as soon as possible after the parent, guardian or a designated adult has been contacted.

To protect the school community from communicable ailments (e.g., strep throat, pink eye, head lice, etc.) parents are asked to report all illnesses to the school office. The office will inform other families as necessary of a particular communicable ailment. Children who show signs of contagion should not attend school or will be sent to the Health Office. If the staff decides the child is too ill to remain at school, s/he will be attended to by staff and rest in the Health Office until s/he is picked up by a parent, guardian or designated adult. Guidelines deciding if a child is too ill to attend or remain at school are:

- If a child has had a fever of 100 degrees or higher under the arm or orally, student should stay home for 24 hours after the temperature has returned to a normal 98.6 degrees
- If a child vomits or has diarrhea he/she should stay home for 24 hours after the last episode
- If a child has a severe or uncontrollable cough, he/she should remain at home
- If a child has had a rash that may be disease-related or for which the cause is unknown, he/she should remain at home
- If a child has yellow or green mucous coming from the nose or mouth, he/she should stay home

All injurious incidents that occur on school grounds and receive any first aid attention must be reported to the Health Office and, any injuries/incident Report must be completed by the supervising teacher or staff member with copies given to the parents/guardians of the student(s) involved and filed in the Health Office.

Parents are notified immediately when serious injuries occur, and 911 is called in the event of an emergency situation (break or fracture, head or neck injury, unconsciousness or blood loss, etc.). Office staff is made especially aware of the possible occurrence of head or neck injuries in young children and are trained to recognize and respond to the symptoms of a concussion. Parents or guardians are notified in the event of a head injury and the possibility of further evaluation by a health care professional; 911 is also called if the student exhibits signs of a concussion and requires immediate medical attention.

If a student is absent due to illness or injury for five or more consecutive days, parents or guardians must produce a doctor's note in order for the absence to be considered excused.

## **Student Medication**

Parents are advised that medication be given at home on a schedule other than school hours. Medication given at school will be dispensed by trained office staff or administration. Teachers should only administer medication during field trips or in emergency situations.

When it becomes necessary for medication to be administered at school, these procedures must be followed.

- The school must receive written permission either from a parent/guardian and/or medical doctor in order to administer any medication (prescription or non-prescription) at school. Please ask office personnel for the proper form to complete this request.
- All non-prescription medication must be sent to the school *in the original container* in which it was purchased, and the container must be labeled with the student's name.
- All prescription medication must be sent to the school *in the correct pharmacy-labeled container* unless a physician's written order recommends otherwise.
- Parents must provide a copy of all relevant information included with the medication.

If parents want their child to possess medication at school, two requirements must be met:

1. A doctor's note stating it is necessary for the student to keep medication with him/her needs to be provided
2. A parental letter accepting all responsibility in the event the medication is lost or misused must be sent to the nurse's office

## **Severe Weather**

Yinghua Academy will close if weather-related conditions necessitate. School closings are announced on both WCCO 830 and Channel 4 as well as on the website and voicemail by 6:00 am.

We ask that parents ensure their child is always dressed appropriately for the weather. Students, teachers and staff do go outside on cold days for recess. Coats, hats, and mittens/gloves are required when the weather is 40 degrees Fahrenheit or colder. Students remain outside unless the temperature with wind chill is less than zero degrees Fahrenheit. However, even on very cold days when students will not be outside for a break, dressing for the weather is still important as an emergency situation could arise which requires students to exit the building.

## **Emergency Preparedness**

Student safety is the first and foremost priority at Yinghua Academy. In the event of a school-wide emergency, Yinghua will initiate its emergency response plan which includes the swift and secure sheltering, accounting, and caring for of students as well as the safe evacuation to a pre-designated evacuation site if necessary. The response plan includes the appropriate emergency communication and subsequent notification of parents and guardians.

Yinghua Academy conducts mandatory emergency drills and required safety inspections in addition to participating in annual school safety conferences and workshops. As a matter of policy, external doors (with the exception of the main exterior double doors, but the inclusion of the main interior double doors) will remain closed and locked throughout school day.

## **Visitors and Guests**

**All visitors, volunteers, and contracted workers at the school during the school day are required to sign in and out at the school office, and wear a visitor's badge.**

# ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

## Chinese Immersion

The leading value at Yinghua Academy is the immersion of students in Chinese language and culture. The expectation is for students to progress through the natural stages of language understanding and acquisition. Students are first asked to listen attentively and they may initially respond in English in Kindergarten; later students can experience a period of silence in their speech; finally, students will begin using the oral language with increasing ease and accuracy. Once students begin using the oral language, they are prepared to learn to read and write.

Yinghua Academy Mandarin language teachers and staff members will only speak Chinese in the presence of students; however, Kindergarten students may speak English to teachers and staff to communicate needs, and teachers will respond. We understand the stages of language learning, but will encourage students to begin speaking Chinese as soon as they are willing to try to do so.

Students in the upper grades will be expected to use only Chinese in all their interactions with teachers, staff and friends.

## Academic Rigor

Yinghua Academy students are expected to come to school prepared to learn. It is the belief and practice of teachers and staff at Yinghua Academy that their responsibility is not only to teach academic content, but also to instruct students in good study habits. These habits include the completion of daily homework on time (including reading daily in Chinese and English), active participation and careful attention in class, and regular attendance. We value positive behavior, and students may receive both group and individual rewards for demonstrating good learning habits.

We teach students that their responsibility at school is to learn. We discourage any behavior that interferes with student learning. Any actions that interrupt student participation or attention in the classroom may result in Yinghua Academy teachers redirecting students to sit quietly alone until they regain self-control and rejoin the rest of the class when they are ready to be participatory and attentive. If the issue persists throughout the day or is of a serious nature, the student may be sent the office for a period of constructive reflection, and continue with the same or a similar learning activity if possible. Parents or guardians will be contacted if a student is sent to the office more than once in a day or several days in a row.

Students with incomplete homework may be asked to complete it during recess. If students are repeatedly missing homework and, subsequently, recess, they will perform other physical exercises to release energy in lieu of their scheduled recess time. Parents or Guardians will be contacted by the classroom teacher when this circumstance occurs. If students are significantly behind in their homework, parents or guardians may be asked to attend a meeting with the administration and teacher to determine how to solve the problem.

## **Homework**

Homework is a very important part of a Yinghua Academy education. At Yinghua Academy, we strive to provide a rigorous academic program, and homework is a necessary component toward achieving that goal. Homework assignments are designed to be an extension of what students have already learned and reviewed in class; students are never given homework focusing on a new concept or requiring skills they have not yet begun to practice.

Parental support for homework includes a well-supplied and well-lit workspace, ongoing encouragement, and continual appreciation of the knowledge and skills learned. Students who consistently complete class and homework assignments well and on time in 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> grade can expect 1 hour of homework each night; students who consistently complete class and homework assignments well and on time in 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade can expect 1½ hours of homework each night. This time allotment may or may not include English reading time. In addition to assigned homework, parents of students in lower grades are encouraged to read to their children in English for at least 30 minutes daily. Kindergarten students will receive homework every weekend, while all other students should expect to be assigned homework each day.

Homework may be scaffolded so as not to exceed the respective time requirements stated above. If students remain behind in their homework and/or have stayed in from recess several times to complete it, communication with parents or guardians will be arranged.

## **Promoting Happiness**

Often we need to learn to be happy. The purpose of the morning meeting time is to provide an occasion to learn how to enjoy learning. Many things can be discouraging and cause us to feel unhappy; however, there are opportunities to make ourselves happy. We at Yinghua Academy teach happiness by interacting, affirming, and modeling happy behavior for and with students and one another.

Students are expected to participate respectfully in morning meeting activities and enjoy other opportunities and have fun with their friends. Curriculum and programming focus on integrating enjoyable activities into the school day. Just as students are required to

participate academically in the classroom, they are also expected to join socially in other learning activities that occur throughout the day. Critical and positive thinking are also taught to help students make good choices in every aspect of their lives. Students learn that happiness is as important as physical and emotional safety, rigorous academic learning, and speaking Chinese language in preparing for a full, successful and satisfying life.

## Parent Communication

Yinghua Academy is strongly committed to establishing positive and supportive relationships with the parents and families of our students. In order to facilitate the communication between parents and teachers, conferences are held twice a year and report cards are sent home at the end of each trimester. Parent – teacher conferences are required and must be rescheduled if the parent is unable to come during a scheduled conference day.

In addition to conference meetings, teachers also send weekly correspondence to parents and guardians via electronic and paper newsletters, and can be available to meet with parents and guardians before or after school or for scheduled appointments. For ease and convenience, parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers primarily via email if possible. Teachers are expected to check their email at least three times throughout the day.

If there are specific behavioral or academic concerns with a student, teachers will contact the parents or guardians. If this level of communication is not successful in addressing the concern, members of the administration may become involved in resolving the issue.

## Conferences and Report Cards

Parent and Teacher Conferences are held twice annually, at the end of the first and second trimesters. At the end of the third trimester a report card is mailed home. Because of the unique nature of our school and the difficulty of finding an appropriate time to have face-to-face conversations in English with classroom teachers, Parent and Teacher Conferences are exceptionally important. Conferences will be scheduled by appointment to ensure privacy and sufficient preparation time. ***If parents are unable to attend the regularly-scheduled conferences, they are expected to schedule an alternative time to meet with teachers.***

In addition to scheduled Conferences, parents may feel free to arrange additional meetings with teachers in the event of academic or behavioral questions or concerns. Teachers may be available before and after school, by appointment, and via telephone or email.

Yinghua Academy is on a trimester system, and thus has three separate grading periods. Information about our grading rubric and reporting system are made available directly by

teachers during conferences. The first two report cards are sent home during the conference period, and the final report card is mailed home soon after the last day of school.

## **Standardized Tests**

Yinghua Academy students participate in all required district-wide and statewide assessments. In cooperation with supportive school measures, we ask parents or guardians to ensure their children receive a healthy breakfast and adequate sleep during the testing period. It is extremely important that all students are in attendance during the testing period.

## **Special Education**

Yinghua Academy identifies and serves at-risk students as necessary. Academically-challenged students are provided with an opportunity to succeed at Yinghua Academy in the following ways: observations of classroom effort, formal assessments, and evaluations by licensed professionals. We are committed to offering a complete immersion education experience to all students enrolled in our program, including those with special needs.

Following the identification of students who may need special education services, the teacher will document at least six weeks of classroom interventions prior to arranging a formal assessment to determine whether special education services are necessary.

## **Arrival and Dismissal**

In developing a traffic plan, consideration has been given to the large number of cars that need to make their way to and from Yinghua Academy every day. **Safety is our primary concern**, along with efficiency for the school and for families. The following information gives a brief outline of the procedures enacted to route traffic effectively at the school. This information is broken into three parts: 1) procedures for bus riders, 2) procedures for parents entering the school for child pick-up, and 3) procedures for car rider pick-up.

### **Bus riders:**

Students who ride one of the three Yinghua Academy buses will be dropped off on the east side of the school building, on Buchanan Street at 8:20 am. They will enter the school by the Main Entrance. In the afternoon, bus riders will leave the school by door #6, and will board their buses on the east side of the school at 3:25 pm. The buses will depart by 3:30 pm. Please keep this area free from any parked cars for the short period of bus arrival and dismissal.

## Car riders:

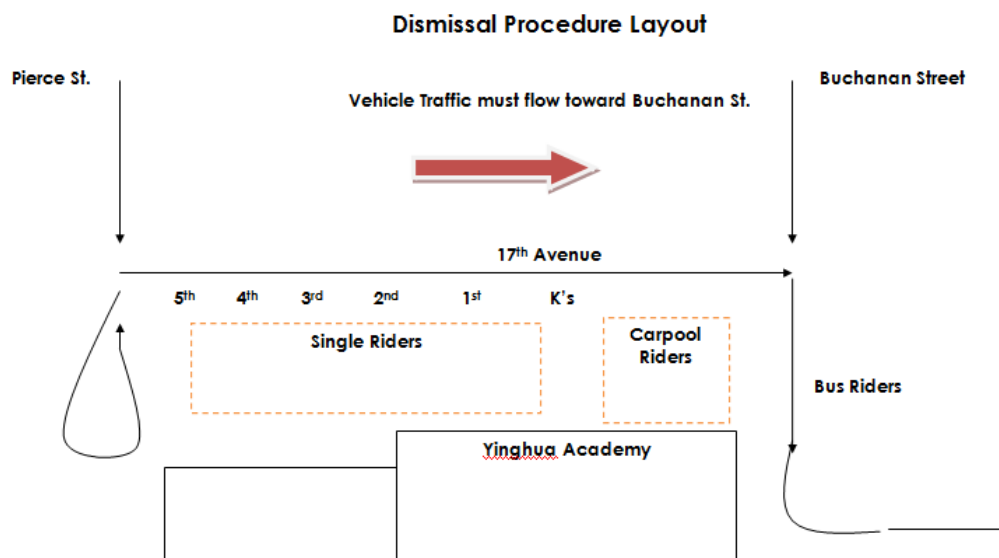
There are separate procedures for those parents who wish to drop-off/pick-up their children by entering the building with their children, and for those who remain in their cars. It is essential for the good flow of traffic that these guidelines be followed. No student should be dropped off/picked up at any place other than the Main Entrance area. Adult supervision is provided at the front of the building and at the Main Entrance.

**Indirect drop-off/pick-up:** Parents are asked to park in areas that are not affected by bus arrival/dismissal, and to keep the YA side of 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue free from parked cars. We ask that you quickly come into the school to pick up your child, and to leave promptly so that other parents may find a parking spot to collect their children.

**Direct drop-off/pick-up:** Please drop off students in the morning only in front of the Main Entrance. For afternoon pick-up, we ask parents to follow the arrows on the diagram, drive down Pierce and move along in front of the building. Students will be lined up on the sidewalk or inside the building in cold weather, with all the children of one carpool standing together, so that they may quickly enter your vehicle and depart, exiting onto Buchanan, and going either north or south.

**Arrival Time:** Students can be dropped off between 7:50am – 8:30am when patrols are on duty. For safety reasons, parents should **only** drop off their child when the patrols and school staff are present. ***Students who have not arrived in the classroom by 8:30 are considered tardy.***

**Dismissal Time:** We ask families to follow the diagram of traffic flow and observe the following schedule.



- 3:20 pm - Parents who park are invited to quickly come to the classroom to pick up their child.
- 3:20 pm - Bus riders walk to the buses.
- 3:25 pm - Buses depart.

- 3:25 pm - After Care students and students attending Sports programming are dismissed.
- 3:30 pm - Remaining students walk outside with their classroom teachers, and stand together with their carpool to be picked up.

Students not picked up by 4:00 pm will wait in the Office. At 4:10 pm all remaining students will be sent to the fee-based Care Program.

**Authorized Drivers:** Students will only be released to adults listed on the Authorized Driver Cards. One copy of the card should remain in each child's backpack at all times. Parents should list all adults (including themselves!) who are allowed to pick up their children from school. Any exceptions to the Authorized Driver Card (even if for one day only) must be made in writing and given to the office. If a driver attempts to pick up a child, and the driver is not on the child's authorized driver card or the driver does not have a card, the driver must park and come into the office.

## **Attendance and Tardiness**

Daily attendance is taken by teachers at 8:30 am. Daily attendance sheets are part of each student's permanent record, so it's important for student attendance to be taken seriously.

Simply stated, students who miss school learn less. When a student misses school, he/she misses out on instruction and support. Without regular support and instruction, a student's opportunity for success is limited. High academic performance goes hand-in-hand with high attendance rates; conversely, low attendance rates contribute to low academic performance. Furthermore, a student who is absent also diminishes the level of learning and success for the entire class: a teacher focused on helping absent students "catch up" upon their return will have less time to devote to the rest of the class as a whole.

Yinghua Academy strongly discourages school absence for reasons other than illness or family emergencies. While a child can make up some of the school work, he/she will have missed daily learning experiences and Chinese language practice that cannot be replicated at home. Educational time spent in class interacting with teachers, aides and other students in Chinese is essential to maintaining progress in all subject areas.

When children are ill, their parents or guardians must call the school to report the illness. If students are going to be absent for more than one day, parents or guardians can make note of that on the first day's call. If a parent or guardian anticipates only one day of absence, but the absence turns out to be longer, the parent or guardian should call the school's office each additional day. When an absence has been called in, it is not necessary to send a note upon the student's return to school. An absence is unexcused unless a parent or guardian calls *before 9:30 am*. After 9:30 am, the absence is considered unexcused.

If a child will be absent due to travel, the parent or guardian must notify the school and the teacher in writing at least two weeks in advance (If the travel is more than two weeks long, notification must be made one month in advance). For the absence to be approved, the travel must be approved by a member of the administration. Excused travel has some academic component. For travel to be excused, parents or guardians must indicate how the child will learn during the trip and how he/she will demonstrate what he/she has learned upon return to school (examples of this include a photo journal, essay or other project).

*When necessary, a letter will be sent to parents or guardians after 12 absences, excused or unexcused, notifying parents or guardians of the requirements of the state attendance law.*

Yinghua Academy values regular attendance and punctuality for many reasons. Students are considered tardy if they arrive after 8:30 am. Learning starts right away at Yinghua Academy, and repeated tardiness can negatively impact the educational experience. Students regularly arriving late or leaving early miss learning time and are disruptive to others.

If students arrive after 8:30 am, parents or guardians must park their car and enter the Main Office to sign-in the student and state the reason for his/her tardiness. While tardiness for appointments and emergencies is excused, tardiness due to traffic, oversleeping, etc. is not.

*When necessary, a letter will be sent to parents or guardians after 10 tardies, excused or unexcused, notifying the parents of the requirements of the state attendance law.*

**In order to maximize students' learning time in the classrooms, if a student needs to leave the school early for any reason, we ask the parent to come to the Office, sign their child out, and pick him/her up directly from the classroom.**

## **Dress Code/Student Appearance**

Students at Yinghua Academy are expected to dress modestly and appropriately for an educational setting. Teachers are primarily responsible for conducting daily student uniform checks and may appeal to the discretion of members of the Main Office staff.

**TOPS:** Students may wear any style light blue shirt or blouse. Shirts with the school's logo are preferred, but are not required. On colder days, students may also wear white or black sweaters or sweatshirts (although any shirt worn underneath must still be light blue).

**BOTTOMS:** Students may wear any style black pants, shorts, skirts, skorts or dresses. Black jumper-style outfits are also acceptable if they are worn with a light blue shirt underneath.

*Tops and bottoms must fit well: excessively baggy or extremely tight clothing is not permitted.*

**SOCKS, SHOES, and OTHER ACCESSORIES:** Socks and tights must be white, black or light blue. Shoes can be any color or style, but must be close-toed. On gym days, students must either

wear or bring gym shoes (tennis shoes). Gym shoes can be kept at school. Other accessories such as jewelry are fine as long as they are appropriate do not present a distraction.

Teachers should check to see that students are in compliance with the uniform policy, and follow the procedures outlined below for those students found not to be in compliance:

**First Infraction:** Teacher sends home the out-of-uniform notice stating the infraction

**Second Infraction:** Teacher sends child with notice to the office and parents are called

**Third Infraction:** Parents are requested to bring to school alternative uniform clothes

To review the formal school district policy, please see the Student Dress and Appearance Policy at [www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies).

## **Locker Policy**

Student lockers are the property of Yinghua Academy. The lockers and their contents may be searched for health and safety reasons at any time, without notice or without student consent. Students should not leave food items in their lockers for longer than one school day. Only coats, hats, boots and school supplies should be left in the locker. To review the entire Search of Student Lockers, Desks, Personal Possessions, and Student's Person Policy, go to [www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies).

## **Discipline Policy**

Every student and employee of Yinghua Academy is entitled to learn and work in a safe school environment. To ensure this, Yinghua Academy has established clear student discipline policies, consequences appropriate to the behavior, and a practice to promote consistency.

Students are expected to behave in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and rules; Yinghua Academy, athletic and activity policies, and school regulations; and in a way that respects the rights and safety of others.

Staff will implement Responsive Classroom strategies within their classroom and handle most situations directly. However, when students are referred for more serious consequences, the discipline guidelines will be implemented. These guidelines and the potential consequences apply anytime a student is present at school, on a school bus, or participating in a school-sponsored activity. This document lists possible violations and the recommended consequences. The infractions and consequences may be modified or disregarded by school administrators if circumstances require an exception (e.g., disabled student whose misbehavior is related to his or her disability).

If a student is dismissed or suspended from school, a parent conference will be required to readmit a student to school.

To review the full policy and guidelines for discipline, go to [www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies).

## **Bullying Prohibition Policy**

All students have a right to feel comfortable and welcome at school, to enjoy the learning process and build healthy human relationships. Yinghua Academy does not tolerate bullying or intimidation of any kind and will respond to each instance in accordance with its disciplinary procedures. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to educate students in a safe environment. Yinghua Academy cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the school and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of Yinghua Academy in its normal operations, it is the school's intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The purpose of this policy is to assist Yinghua Academy in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior. To review the full policy, go to [www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies)

## **Student Sex NonDiscrimination (Title IX) Policy**

Students are protected from discrimination on the basis of sex pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 and the Minnesota Human Rights Act. To review this policy, go to [www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies).

## **Student Internet Acceptable Use and Safety**

Students are expected to use computer technology for the purposes of learning only. The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for access to the school district computer system and acceptable and safe use of the Internet, including electronic communications. Any students using computer technology for any other reasons without explicit permission from teachers or staff will be subject to the appropriate behavioral responses. Students and parents or guardians must read and sign the Internet Use Agreement and return it to the teacher to keep on file throughout the school year. To view the entire Internet Policy, go to [www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-policies).

## **School Library**

Supporting learning is the primary mission of Yinghua Academy's library.

Students and faculty/staff are encouraged to use the library on a regular basis:

- Each classroom is scheduled for a weekly library session.

- During library session, students may participate in a "Library Skills Lesson", book reading time, or simply check out books.
- It is important for students to return their books during their scheduled library session. Please help your student to do this. Please visit the school website for the library schedule. ([www.yinghuaacademy.org/current-families/library/](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/current-families/library/))
- Parent volunteers and classroom teachers make every effort to help students choose materials that are appropriate for their reading level and interests.

Students are allowed to check out 2 books at a time, preferably one English and one Chinese.

Students must return their checked out books at each library session in order to check out new books. Students may return their books at any time to the library return drop box, located outside the multipurpose room. Books are considered overdue after 3 weeks.

Students may renew a book, if book is not requested by another, up to 2 times.

A \$10.00 replacement fee is required for a lost or damaged item. This \$10.00 fee can be turned into the front office, with a note indicating the child's name and it is for a lost/damaged book:

- Damaged Book = if a library item is returned in a condition that makes it unusable.
- Lost Book = if an item is checked out and is six weeks overdue.
- **NOTE:** All library fees must be paid in full in order to receive report cards.

**Acceptable use of the library:** When students use the library at school, they must follow library rules that help them learn, such as being quiet, no throwing books, no running, etc. If the rules are broken, students will get a warning and be asked to change their behavior. If the misbehavior continues then students will be given logical consequences, such as losing library sessions or not being allowed to check out books. Parents will be notified about the behavior and the consequences.

Yinghua Academy library operates a birthday book program and a summer reading challenge program. For more information on these programs, please visit [www.yinghuaacademy.org/current-families/library/](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/current-families/library/)

Yinghua Academy library operates through parent volunteers. To volunteer in the library, please go to [www.yinghuaacademy.org/volunteer/current-volunteer-needs/](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/volunteer/current-volunteer-needs/)

## Field Trips

Teachers take students on exciting and enriching educational trips to various destinations during the school year. Field trips are very important because they connect students with surrounding communities and engage them in the learning process in new and different

ways. Permission slips are sent home in advance of field trips and any necessary accommodations to the school day are made and communicated accordingly.

## **Birthdays and Toys**

Celebrating birthdays can be an exciting and important event for children. Students are allowed to bring in a special birthday treat on their birthday provided, there is enough for each child and snacks do not include peanuts or other common allergens. Birthday treats must also be store-purchased and must be ready to serve (individually packaged preferred!). Parents may not bring in birthday snacks that require any preparation (such as cutting fruit or cake or serving ice cream), which can take away from class time; instead parents can bring in fruits that can be eaten whole, ice cream bars or cupcakes. Bringing in a healthy treat or small gift (such as stickers, pencils or erasers) for each child is also a great alternative! If a child is having a birthday party and will be inviting other Yinghua students, parents are asked not to *send the invitation cards to school and have their child pass them out.*

Yinghua Academy does not permit toys (playing cards, figurines, etc.) or electronic games to be brought to school, with the exception to this policy being those pre-approved toys brought for Show and Share time. Toys found with children will be taken and either picked up by parents or returned to students at the end of the day to be taken back home.

## **Yinghua Care and Enrichment**

The Yinghua Care Program is designed to meet both the needs of parents and their children by providing a safe and nurturing environment before and after the designated school day.

Yinghua Academy offers before school childcare starting at 7:00 am every morning except federal holidays and breaks; children are offered a simple breakfast in a quiet setting before the school day starts. After-school care begins after dismissal until 6:00pm; during this time students are served a snack and beverage and participate in social and educational activities indoors and outdoors (weather permitting), such as crafts and games. Students are also given opportunities for homework and study. The atmosphere and activities are intended to enhance the educational day, while giving students an opportunity to expend energy and develop interpersonal social-emotional skills.

In addition, Yinghua offers an extensive Enrichment Program after school that features a variety of core and cultural classes in music, art and athletics among others. Enrichment programming is seasonal and course catalogues are made available in advance.

Yinghua Care and Enrichment are both pre-pay programs. Please contact the Yinghua Care Enrichment Coordinator for more details or the school office with basic questions, and refer to the Yinghua Care registration form for billing and additional information.

## BEHAVIORAL EDUCATION – RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM

In Chinese, the word education is 教育(jiao yu) which means to teach and to nurture. At Yinghua, it is our responsibility to be models for students, helping them to become engaged learners who are respectful and self-controlled based on our four guiding principles:

1. Safety (and Respect for Self and Others)
2. Speak Chinese (Chinese Language and Culture Learning)
3. Learn (Rigorous Academics)
4. Happiness

We believe that it is the right and the responsibility of all students to benefit from and abide by these four principles, so that we all may enjoy success at Yinghua. We recognize and discuss these four principles regularly at Yinghua Academy in both English and Chinese.

We also integrate these four principles into proactive programming and instruction according to a behavioral education curriculum, and using Responsive Classroom strategies schoolwide.

The *Responsive Classroom* (RC) is an approach to teaching and learning that fosters safe, challenging, and joyful classrooms and schools, kindergarten through eighth grade. Developed by classroom teachers, it consists of practical strategies for bringing together social and academic learning throughout the school day. Since 1981, thousands of classroom teachers and hundreds of schools have used the *Responsive Classroom* approach to help create learning environments where children thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. In urban, rural, and suburban settings nationwide, educators using these strategies report increases in student investment, responsibility, and learning, and decreases in problem behaviors.

The *Responsive Classroom* approach is informed by the work of educational theorists and the experiences of classroom teachers. Seven principles guide this approach:

- The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
- How children learn is as important as what they learn.
- The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
- There is a specific set of social skills that children need in order to be successful academically and socially: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control (C.A.R.E.S.).
- Knowing the children we teach—individually, culturally, and developmentally—is as important as knowing the content we teach.
- Knowing the families of the children we teach and working with them as partners is essential to children’s education.
- How the adults at school work together is as important as individual competence:

lasting change begins with the adult community.

At the heart of the *Responsive Classroom* approach are ten classroom practices:

- *Morning Meeting*—gathering as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead
- *Rule Creation*—helping students create classroom rules that allow all class members to meet their learning goals
- *Interactive Modeling*—teaching children to notice and internalize expected behaviors through a unique modeling technique
- *Positive Teacher Language*—using words and tone to promote children’s active learning and self-discipline
- *Logical Consequences*—responding to misbehavior in a way that allows children to fix and learn from their mistakes while preserving their dignity
- *Guided Discovery*—introducing materials using a format that encourages creativity and responsibility
- *Academic Choice*—increasing student motivation by differentiating instruction and allowing students teacher-structured choices in their work
- *Classroom Organization*—setting up the physical room in ways that encourage independence, cooperation, and productivity
- *Working with Families*—hearing families’ insights and helping them understand the school’s teaching approaches
- *Collaborative Problem-Solving*—using conferencing, role-playing, and other strategies to engage students in problem-solving