



Sue's News

Dear parents,

First of all, thank you for your partnership with us for the sake of our kids. Collectively, over 90% of you met with one or more of your children's teachers during Parent Teacher Conferences. I received feedback from both parents and teachers indicating that your conversations were productive and insightful. Now we begin the sprint to the finish of the 2013-2014 school year. Together let's do it with gusto!

Next Thursday, May 1, from 7:00-8:00PM you, and MS students in particular, are invited to attend the Yinghua Futures Panel.

That evening we will host representatives from four different high schools in the Twin Cities: Mounds View High School, DeLaSalle High School, Minnetonka High School, and MNOHS (Minnesota Online High School). The purpose of the panel presentation will be to give students and parents exposure to what high schools today have to offer students. From my advising course this fall with our current eighth graders, I learned of their priorities in choosing their next school: size, location, Chinese and other world languages, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate programs, extracurricular activities, sports, musical offerings, theater, and so much more. Naturally, websites offer information but we hope to capture the essence of the school community from the administrators and teachers who have graciously agreed to share their school's profile with us. Luckily, we will also have past graduates of Yinghua and their parents in the audience to give us their insights and experiences thus far.

You might wonder why these schools? The traditional schools were chosen because we already have graduates who attend, and they do offer Chinese as an elective; in the case of MNOHS, it will be possible in future for YA students to enroll in an online Chinese immersion course appropriate for our graduates AND attend any HS. The choices of good schools are many; in future, our goal is to invite new and different schools of interest to our families.

I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity. As our YA Futures Task Force proved, it is never too early to begin to think about your child's full educational journey; some of our committee members have first graders!

You won't want to miss the Singapore Math session on Tuesday, April 29th either! It will be a busy week at Yinghua.

Warm regards,

Sue Berg
Executive Director

Luyi's Curriculum Corner

Dear Parents,

Immersion schools use the target language as the instructional tool to teach each subject area. One of the goals for the immersion students is to be proficient in the target language as well as English. In our school, we aim to reach high proficiency in both Chinese and English. There are fundamental differences in these two languages: how they are written, how they sound, and how they are structured grammatically. In order to closely monitor our students progress in Chinese, we use Student Oral proficiency Assessment (SOPA), which is a well-recognized tool in the language field, developed by Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL).

SOPA is an interview-based assessment for grades PreK-1 and grades 2-8, respectively. SOPA compounds a series of interactive and summative questions which allow students to demonstrate their performance in oral fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. The assessment requires significant time and training to implement, but offers a fairly comprehensive view of students' oral proficiency. All test questions are translated into Mandarin Chinese, and a rating rubric for Mandarin Chinese has also been developed by CAL.

We follow SOPA testing protocols to assess our students while they are in kindergarten (to obtain the baseline of their Chinese oral proficiency), 2nd, 4th and Middle School students to monitor their progress. In order for students to feel comfortable to produce language, one of the test givers is the students' classroom teacher and the other is the test recorder. The students are paired based on similar language proficiency levels and compatibility so they can benefit from each other's company.

For immersion students, their first task during the assessment is to identify and name objectives - classroom learning manipulatives are used to extract students' basic vocabulary ability. The second series of questions ask students to introduce themselves and talk about their families and birthday activities. The third task provides students with an opportunity to describe a process in a content area using sentence-level speech. This task is specifically designed to evaluate students' academic language. The next activity is for students to tell a story based on the picture book they are shown - whether students are able to use correct grammar and speak at paragraph-level. After task four, students in higher grade-level will also be assessed in their reasoning and arguing skills. In summary, we assess students' listening and speaking ability, their vocabulary level, and grammar usage. We film all the SOPA testing sessions, so we may go back and check students' level of proficiency, should it be necessary. The video-taped assessment data is also a good indication to help adjust our teaching.

Assessment is an import part of academic work; we watch each student's progress and learn from our data. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

Enjoy the beautiful weather!

Dr. Luyi Lien
Academic Director

Yinghua Art

Parents,

That's right, all of you! I have begun to remind the students that in just 4 short weeks we will all be bringing home our art portfolios for the year. While many of our students are very aware of this, I also think it is good to prepare our families. All of our students have been working hard this year to become more aware of our world and connected to it through art. We have learned about many different cultures, countries and, even art in different centuries, but more importantly we have learned a lot about ourselves. We've learned more about what we like and what we don't; we've learned that some materials and ideas come more easily than others, but that when we face a challenge we have the biggest opportunity for growth and well-earned and fought for success. Our students should feel very proud the day they bring their portfolio home. They should share their art to a captive and appreciative audience.... that's you! The very best gift you can give to Yinghua's art department is your support to your artist. In the next weeks, I'm going to be including some pointers that will help guide families through talking to their students about their work, stay tuned! For today, I thought I would include some pictures of our 1st graders as we paint our Vincent van Gogh Sunflowers and hope for spring! Beginning this week, you might ask your student if there is a project from art this year that they are most excited to share with you on portfolio day. You might follow that up with asking, "What is it makes you most excited about that one?"

Thanks!



Chinese Folklore Performances

Newbery Honor author Grace Lin brings readers another enthralling fantasy featuring her marvelous full-color illustrations. *Starry River of the Sky* is filled with Chinese folklore, fascinating characters, and exciting new adventures.

Based on the 2010 Newbery Honors book, this "fantasy crossed with Chinese folklore", a world premiere from Stages Theatre Company, is presented in the Hopkins Jaycees Studio with limited seating. **Run time is 90 minutes and for ages 7 and up.**

Performances are at the Stages Theatre. Tickets are buy one, get one free for the performances on April 26 (1pm and 7pm) and April 27 (4:30pm).

Host an Exchange Student

World Heritage is seeking families to host international high school students next year. If you are interested in hosting or have any questions, please call 720-209-1145 or email courtney@world-heritage.org.

Class Picture Day is This Tuesday!

This Tuesday is Class Picture Day. Pictures will be taken of each class in uniform.

PowerAnnouncement Technical Difficulties

There has been a malfunction in PowerAnnouncement, resulting in either a delay or not delivering messages. We are working on fixing it. Please contact us if you know you are not getting newsletters. In the meantime, you can view all newsletters at <http://www.yinghuaacademy.org/current-families/newsletters>. Thank you for your patience.

Current & Incoming Families: Come learn about Singapore Math!

Don't forget about the YACA general membership meeting this Tuesday (April 29th) from 6-8pm. YACA will be hosting Allison Coates to present on Singapore Math. The uniform sale is also held this evening; the YACA Board members for 2014-15 will be elected, and the budget will be reviewed as well.

This event is open to both current and incoming families. Childcare will be provided, but you must sign up in advance by emailing Lindsey Alexander at yaca-treasurer@yinghuaacademy.org.

Scholastic Book Fair Online

The Scholastic Book Fair is still open online! Order books that were sold out at the book fair last week (Minecraft handbook, anyone?) or browse a larger selection of titles. All purchases are sent to school free of shipping costs, and help Yinghua earn more books for our expanding library. The last day to shop is Monday, 4/28. <http://bookfairs.scholastic.com/homepage/yinghua>



Orchestra Update

Rehearsal: Whole orchestra rehearsal will resume next week, April 30 and May 1. Due to MCA schedule, Concerto Orchestra's rehearsal will switch to Thursday, 8:30am-9:15am. Concertino Orchestra rehearses on Wednesday, 8:30-9:15am. If students have MCA on rehearsal day, they don't need to participate in full orchestra rehearsal. Regular sectional schedule is still applied.

UPCOMING DATES

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| April 29 | Spring Class Pictures |
| 6:00PM-8:00PM | YACA General Membership Meeting |
| May 2 | |
| 8:30AM-10:00AM | First Friday Coffee @Sip Coffeebar |
| 6:00PM-9:30PM | 4th & 5th Grade Activity Night |
| May 8 | |
| 9:30AM-10:30AM | School Tour |
| May 9 | <i>NO SCHOOL</i> Teacher Professional Development Day |

Conservatory of Music Update

Conservatory of Music's annual student recital will be held on May 17th, Saturday at 10am-11am, 11am-12pm, 1pm-2pm, 2pm-3pm in the cafeteria. You are invited to enjoy the musical performances from the students and teachers of Yinghua Academy's Conservatory of Music!

JOIN CUB SCOUTS!

I would like to invite all interested families to join Cub Scout Pack 153 located in St. Anthony, Minnesota. Cub Scouting is for boys from kindergarten through fifth grade. Cub Scouts participate in many fun, character building, and community oriented activities such as campfires, den meetings, games, pinewood derby racing, ice fishing, camping, and much, much more. Pack 153 is small, friendly, family-oriented, and welcomes all new members.

We are looking for boys to join our Pack all year round. Den meetings meet every other week through June, have a light summer schedule, and start back up in the fall. Prospective members are encouraged to join at any time, or to "take a tour" during our Den meetings to see if we are a good fit.

For more information, contact Mark Duncan at: (612) 708-0865, or mduncan@bcgminnesota.com.

Chinese Kunqu and Traditional Music Concert

The professional Chinese music ensemble Spirit of Nature will join forces with Shanghai-based Kunqu opera star Shen Yili in a rare performance of Chinese *kunqu* and traditional music in Mairs Concert Hall at Macalester College, 1600 Grand Avenue in St. Paul, on Sunday, April 27 at 7:30 p.m. A workshop presented by Spirit of Nature will precede the concert at 6:30 p.m.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION UPDATE

Popsicle Run Training (Optional) May 3- CANCELLED

Popsicle Run Grades 1-8

What is the popsicle run? It is a trail run for fitness. Students are encouraged to do their best and to work toward a personal record (PR). All finishers receive a Popsicle. Grade 1=1/2 mile; Grade 2=2/3 mile; Grade 3-8=1 mile.

May 12 Grade 5

May 14 Grades 1-4 & 6-8

Specific times and training tips will be posted in the next update or on Ms.Total's classroom page.

Parents are welcome to participate, cheer or help with score keeping.

Wheels Week Grades 3-6

May 19-23

Students need to bring their own helmet.

Bring your bike, in-line skates, scooter or skate board.

Scooter Days Grades 1-2 & 7-8

May 19-23.

Students will need to bring their own helmet.

Scooter lessons and pedestrian safety for Grades 1-2. Fun with scooters, skateboards or in-line skates for Grades 7-8

Jump Ropes for SALE

The Physical Education Department is selling speed jump ropes for \$4 each. Proceeds will go toward buying indoor jump ropes for next year. Youth and adult sizes available.

Benefits of jumping rope: cheap and portable; helps you lose weight; works on agility, speed and coordination; fun & challenging; lots of tricks to learn; increases blood flow to brain; improves spatial awareness and reading skills; builds bone density and muscular endurance; and much more.

DRAGON ATHLETIC UPDATE

Planning ahead for Fall sports 2014. The following are sports that we would like to offer to the students. In the next week, I will be asking students to sign up if they are interested in playing one or two of these sports next fall. Please discuss these options with your child. For more information contact Sarah Total at sarah.total@yinghuaacademy.org

Co-ed Travel Soccer grades 5-8. Teams play against other schools. Monday, Wednesday & Friday.

In-house Soccer grades 2-4. Students divided into teams and play games against each other. Tuesday or Thursday (the exact day TBD).

In-house Flag Football grades 3-8. Students divided into teams and play games against each other. Tuesday or Thursday (the exact day TBD).

In-house Badminton grades 4-8. Students learn badminton basics and scrimmage against each other. Tuesday or Thursday (the exact day TBD).



MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Social Studies

Grade 6

Students presented “memoirs” based on the flour, lumber and iron industries in late 1800s Minnesota. Some students even set their “memoirs” to music! These presentations were performances which showed what students learned.

Grade 8

Students are analyzing graphs and creating charts based on data about new nation-states. Ask your student which optional type of data he/she has chosen.

Math

Math MCA exams are on 5/1 and 5/2. The students have had 4 practice MCA tests (one per week; on Thursdays) in class, and the teachers have reviewed the math concepts with the students based on their MCA prep test performances. The students are encouraged to review MCA concepts and problems using the MCA prep packets, review questions and online MCA prep question bank for 10-15 minutes per day (about 3-5 math questions). The students are certainly welcome to review and practice MCA math questions as much as their time and schedule will allow it outside of school! Keep in mind that math is a subject where *TIME SPENT = FAMILIARITY!*

Academic Performance is on May 16th. Often, we wonder how to integrate math concepts and skills in the system of living? When would we apply the math functions and equations? Needless to say, math builds and creates a foundation of learning. Learning math is one way to become an independent thinker and problem solver. Let Yinghua MS students show you how it works on 5/16!



(See the science update on the next page)

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Continued...

Science

5th grade is studying energy, force and motion. Students explored the idea of relative temperature by using their fingers to test temperature and then confirming with a thermometer. They also described how a thermometer works to measure the temperature of a substance. A first-class lever experiment was also done to show the relationship between the distance of the load from the fulcrum and the effort force required to lift it.

6th grade experimented with states of matter by making "a real solid liquid". Students are studying the physical properties of matter. The application of these properties in materials science and engineering has also been a topic of discussion.

7th and 8th grade is studying chemistry and the chemical properties of substances. Students made a "black magic" color changing reaction in their lab groups to demonstrate how a chemical change shows with new physical properties. They are also creating presentations about the elements and the periodic table.

