



Sue's News

Dear Parents,

Unfortunately, our world has been rocked by yet another tragedy, as we learned today. The fact that it was an elementary school setting deepens the sadness and horror for us as parents and educators, whose responsibility it is to keep our children safe and secure. Always we strive to live by our guiding principles and *safety* is one of those five tenets that guide our actions at Yinghua. Our commitment to this endeavor is heightened in times such as these.

When we gather back together on Monday morning as a school community, we know that this tragedy will be in our hearts and minds. You, as parents, will have made decisions as to whether or not and to what extent you discuss this disturbing situation. With 518 students in KG-Grade 8 from 289 families, we appreciate that the depth and detail will be vastly varied. We will strive to honor that fact but realize also that we must address the potential worries and fears of our children. Our message to the students will be:

- We care deeply for each of you. Let's count the number of grown-ups at school who know you by name and whose job it is to watch over you.
- We practice safety. From body safe, heart safe, and mind safe perspectives, we invest time proactively.
- We talk and we listen. Always we strive to keep the child's perspective uppermost in our minds.

I am reminded of the oft repeated saying, "It takes a village." Our collective hearts are broken. Now more than ever, I am grateful for our Yinghua Academy school community. With the Board of Education, parents, and staff as our partners, I know that we will navigate this tragedy better together.

Warm regards,
Sue

Luyi's Curriculum Corner

Dear Yinghua Families,

Winter Break is just around the corner and the teachers are busy preparing assignments to send home with students next week. Our main goal for the Winter Break homework is to help students keep in touch with Chinese and retain what they have learned so that when returning from the two-week break, students will only need a brief review before new materials are introduced.

The homework may include writing exercises, a CD to listen to, and/or recommended websites for online activities. Teachers also planned out a schedule to help students spread out their homework and keep in contact with Chinese daily. Please read the letter from your child's teacher carefully and support the teachers' effort to help students maintain their language skills during the break. Research shows that for language learning, it is more effective to study 15 minutes every day than to study for 2 hours once a week. I would like to suggest that parents help to designate 15 to 30 minutes every day for children to connect with their Chinese materials. If the homework packet includes a CD, please do use it to enrich your child's Chinese language learning. The CD may contain children's songs, poems, rhymes, stories, recordings of the lessons from class, and possibly popular songs, which ideally will connect students with the contemporary Chinese youth culture. A good time to listen to the CD can be during breakfast; or perhaps after dinner, you and your child can listen to the CD and read the little books they learned in Term I together. Or even before bedtime, your child to tell you, in English, the Chinese stories that they've listened to.

Some teachers may recommend websites for games, stories and films to help students stay in touch with Chinese online. Many of the websites also have English translation but please encourage students to use the Chinese version and/or pinyin when they go on these sites.

In addition, parents are encouraged to help create real-life experiences for children to use Chinese. During the break, you may like to plan a trip to an Asian grocery store and buy something that has Chinese characters on the package which your child can read. It will make your child proud of herself/himself, even if s/he can only identify only one or two characters. Or consider having dinner at a Chinese restaurant and let your child talk to a Chinese waiter.

These experiences are not intended for your child to "show off" their language ability, rather to give her/him exposure to the language. Another great idea is to visit a local library and check out Chinese books, movies, and music. For example, Saint Anthony Park Library and the downtown Central Library (both in St. Paul) both have a collection of Chinese materials.

We would appreciate parents' support to help students follow the homework schedule to avoid the stress of trying to finish everything the night before coming back to school. Please contact me at luyi.lien@yinghuaacademy.org with any suggestions or questions you may have on how to help your child retain their acquired Chinese language skills. I will be more than happy to communicate with you.

Sincerely,
Luyi Lien, Ph.D.

Hello Parents,

Last Friday we had our first 4th and 5th Grade Activity Night of the year with 90 students in attendance! Over-all, the night was a huge success and a lot of fun. We started with pizza and pop in the cafeteria and the place was buzzing with excitement and anticipation. After pizza, we divided the students into groups for a scavenger hunt that covered the whole school. The students had a blast running around looking for clues with their friends. After that, we played Capture the Flag on the soccer field in the snow with the field lights on and a new game called Uncle Sam in the gym. Many parents came by to pick up their children and saw the fun in the gym first hand. I'd like to thank Bobby Jo Rademacher, Chiao-Mei Chu, Sue Berg, and Bo Liu for giving up their Friday night to chaperone with me. I couldn't have done it without their help. I'd also like to thank student Prefects Jane Andreas, Natalie Lozinski, Fisher Chu, Mia Erickson, Josh Mason, Ellie Nestingen, Yun Yun Patten, Zoe Lindberg, Ahna Yang, Jasmine Quinlan, and Chantelle Silivan for helping me plan and facilitate the event. They did an amazing job! If you missed the event, don't worry. We have one more in May that we're already beginning to plan. It promises to be even more fun than the last one!



Calling all Super Spellers!

The Second Annual Yinghua Spelling Bee will take place on January 16th at 1:30pm in the Yinghua Gymnasium. Classroom Bees will take place during English class on Thursday, January 10th. The top two spellers from the classroom Bees in grades 4-8 will be invited to attend the All-School Bee. The winner of the All-School Bee will then go on to represent Yinghua in the regional Scripps Spelling Bee!

A complete list of the words that will be used in the classroom bees can be found on the web page of each of the English teachers. Or e-mail Ms. Rademacher if you are interested in a pdf file of the words via e-mail:

bobbi.rademacher@yinghuaacademy.org

May the odds be ever in your favor!

Reminders from the health office

If your child has:	He/she may return to school if there is:
Fever over 100 degrees	No fever for 24 hours without the aid of medication
Vomiting or diarrhea	No vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours after the last episode
Rash	The rash has been diagnosed by a physician

Middle School Page

For MS Students and Parents from MS Teachers

6th graders have been learning about causes of the US Dakota War. They examined a treaty in another language and were asked to sign it. The room rang with protest: "This is in another language!" and "I cannot read this!"

Interesting angle for our bilingual students: the treaty they were given was in Spanish and, as it happens, two of our grade 6 students are *trilingual*—both speak Spanish at home! The 6th graders turned to their trilingual peers and asked for help. This particular treaty (Treaty of Versailles, 1919) not being written at a grade 6 level, our native Spanish speakers only partially understood it. Students related the experience to how the Dakota leaders may have felt when they were in a similar position. Many could not read it, and even the few bilingual Dakota may have only partially understood it.

This led to an interesting student question. What about those long documents at the end of which one is asked to click "I agree." Are we supposed to read all those words? I wonder too!

8th graders are learning what makes new nation-states successful. They will be "visiting" and evaluating data (such as GDP, life expectancy, poverty, ethnic diversity) in each of 5 countries, including Russia and 4 new nation-states (that were formerly part of the Soviet Union.) Their first "stop" was in Kazakhstan, and they are reading about that new, relatively large country this weekend.

By the way, do you know a local relative or friend who is from or has visited Russia, Kazakhstan, or other former parts of the Soviet Union? We would be thrilled to invite that person to visit our class and tell us what the place feels like! Please contact Ke Laoshi jan.kleinman@yinghuaacademy.org

Dear Parents in Grades 6 - 8,

We are forming a student group to visit China this summer. Email Dr. Luyi Lien at luyi.lien@yinghuaacademy.org for information about this exciting opportunity for culture, friendship and fun!

On Saturday, Yinghua's three robotics teams participated in their first Lego League tournament at Salk Elk River Middle School. There were 32 total teams competing, and all three Yinghua teams did a great job. Here are some of the specific results and comments from the judges:

- The fourth-grade team, called "Dragons in Black", made it to the second bracket of head-to-head robotics competition, and had a very good research presentation.
 - The fifth-grade team, called "Seven Dragons", scored very well in team independence, strategy and innovation, and presented an interesting solution for their research project.
- The middle school team, called "Techno-Dragons to the Shazamth Power" (good luck translating that!) had a very original solution for their research project, and developed a good process for selecting robot missions.

The tournament was a lot of fun, and teams are already starting to begin planning for next year. Congratulations to our Lego League teams!



Morning Homework Help

New this term, students may come to the computer room between 8:00 and 8:30AM for homework help!
No registration needed.

Lost and Found

The deadline for picking up lost and found items is Wednesday, December 19th!!

Thanks to Dazzling Dave for a week of yo-yo tips and lessons. You can still purchase your yo-yo until Wednesday, December 19th. Sales stop daily once recess/lunch ends.



UPCOMING DATES

Dec 17	Term I Report Cards Mailed
Dec 20 6:30PM	YACA Board Meeting
Dec 21	Winter Sampler Enrichment Ends
Dec 24—Jan 4	Winter Break