

Yinghua Academy District #4140

Annual Report on Curriculum, Instruction and Student Achievement

October 1, 2011

**Yinghua Academy 2010-2011 Annual Report
on Curriculum, Instruction, and Student Achievement**

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Yinghua Academy 2010-11 Annual Report

1. INTRODUCTION

Yinghua Academy, founded in 2006, is the first Chinese immersion charter public school in the U.S. and the first Chinese immersion school in the Midwest. As the first school of its kind in the Midwest, Yinghua Academy is a national leader in Mandarin Chinese immersion education. Yinghua Academy is a bilingual, tuition-free, public charter school with an international perspective.

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.

Yinghua Academy is dedicated to a free-access quality education. As a charter school, Yinghua Academy provides an innovative and successful educational path for all students. Yinghua served 377 K-7th grade students in the 2010-2011 school year. Yinghua Academy has a charter for kindergarten through 8th grade, and is currently fully articulated, serving K-8th grades in the 2011-2012 academic year.

2. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Election of Yinghua Academy Board Members

According to our by-laws and established procedures, we elect new board members every June. As of July 1 every year, the newly-elected board members join the board; and the board members who did not run for reelection or were not reelected leave the board. The most recent board elections were held May 20 – June 8, with a public meeting for candidates at the Annual Meeting of the School on June 6, 2011, and ballots tallied the evening of June 8, 2011.

2010-11 Election Date: June 8, 2011

2011-12 Anticipated Election Month: June, 2012

2010-2011 School Year Charter Public School Board

<u>Name</u>	<u>Board Position</u>	<u>Group Affiliation</u> (if teacher, file folder #)	<u>Date Elected</u>	<u>Date Seated</u>	<u>Term Expiration</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Email Address</u>	<u>Member Meeting Attendance Rate</u>
Abigail Pribbenow	Member/Chair	Parent	June 2009	July 2009	June 2012	612-330-1477	Abigail.pribbenow@yinghuaacademy.org	88%
Doug Parish	Treasurer	Parent	June 2009	July 2009	June 2012	651-308-1239	Doug.parish@yinghuaacademy.org	76%
Cindy Moeller	Chair/Member	Community	June 2008	July 2008	June 2011	651-699-6316	Moeller312@aol.com	100%
Luyi Lien	Member	Academic Director and Parent	June 2010	July 2010	Resigned January, 2011	651-643-0853	luyi@yinghuaacademy.org	100%
Taoyuan Li	Member	Teacher #377724	June 2009	July 2009	June 2012	651-415-1812	Taoyuan.li@yinghuaacademy.org	84%
Keri Norell	Member	Teacher #403746	June 2008	July 2008	June 2011	651-653-2211	keri@yinghuaacademy.org	88%

Mary Ann Choy	Secretary	Parent	June 2008	July 2008	June 2011	651-470-0249	machoy2010@gmail.com	96%
Scott Jax	Member	Parent	Appointed to fill vacated position July 2009	July 2009	June 2012	763-424-6678	Scott.jax@yinghuaacademy.org	72%
Kristin Swenson	Member	Parent	June 2010	July 2010	June 2013	952-736-3698	Kristin.swenson@yinghuaacademy.org	96%
Jen Shadowens	Member/Secretary	Parent	June 2010	July 2010	June 2013	612-706-8688	Jen.shadowens@yinghuaacademy.org	88%
Ben Weng	Member	Community #444702	Appointed to fill vacated position January 2011	January 2011	June 2011		Pangyen.weng@metrostate.edu	64%
Rosemary Lawrence	Member	Community #232555	June 2011	July 2011	June 2014	612-281-7973	Rosemary.lawrence@yinghuaacademy.org	N/A
Karen Lu	Member	Parent	June 2011	July 2011	June 2014	612-929-2737	Karen.lu@yinghuaacademy.org	N/A
Ruth Hansen	Member	Teacher #416221	June 2011	July 2011	June 2014	952-808-0899	ruth.hansen@yinghuaacademy.org	N/A
Lou Bender	Member	Teacher #439740	June 2011	July 2011	June 2014	651-644-1774	Lou.bender@yinghuaacademy.org	N/A

Biographical information about Yinghua Academy board members is available on the Yinghua Academy website, www.yinghuaacademy.org.

3. **SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

The school administrative team for the 2010-11 school year was comprised of three directors: the Interim Executive Director, the Academic Director, and the Director of Students, Families, and Community Relationships.

Ursina Swanson, Interim Executive Director of Yinghua Academy, was hired January 3, 2011 as the temporary replacement for Betsy Lueth, Executive Director, following Ms. Lueth's resignation October 29, 2010. Ursina Swanson holds an M.A. in Education from the University of Minnesota, and an Education Specialist degree and Administrator's license from the University of St. Thomas. She provides guidance and overall direction to the curriculum design and implementation at Yinghua Academy. Ms. Swanson retired in 2009 from Park Spanish Immersion in St. Louis Park, after leading the school from its early beginnings to a full K-6 with over 600 students. Under her leadership, Park Spanish Immersion was consistently awarded a 5-Star rating from the Minnesota Department of Education, and was named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence, the first language immersion school in Minnesota to receive this recognition.

Her immersion teaching experience includes elementary school at Normandale French Immersion School and middle school at Valley View Middle School, both in Edina. At Valley View, she also served as Dean of Students and developed secondary French immersion classes. In addition to this work in Minnesota, Mrs. Swanson has lived and worked in several West African countries, in Haiti, and in Madagascar, including teaching positions in international schools and in French immersion classrooms abroad. She can speak seven languages.

The Academic Director, Dr. Luyi Lien, has served as Academic Director of Yinghua Academy since the school's founding in 2006. She has taught elementary students in both Taiwan and the U.S.; holds a PhD. from the Department of Education from the University of Minnesota; and has published several elementary level textbooks in Taiwan. She provides daily support and resources to all teachers at Yinghua Academy, and leads curriculum development and mapping for all grades.

The instructional leadership at Yinghua Academy participated in many professional development activities. Betsy Lueth, Executive Director for the beginning of the 2010-11 school year, had a thorough Professional Improvement Plan (PIP) which also supported her pathway to obtaining a principal's license. When she resigned, the School Board searched for and hired an Interim Executive Director on a part-time basis. As Ursina Swanson was a highly credentialed and experienced educational administrator with a principal's license, a professional development plan was not in place for her because of the part-time and temporary nature of her role. She maintained membership in a principal's organization and attended leadership trainings in school management and sponsored by the Minnesota Elementary School Principal's Association. She presented an academic paper at the University of Minnesota, and testified before Congress. She also kept in close contact with immersion professionals such as Drs. Mimi Met, Barb Tuckner, Audrey Buss, and Diane Heacox among other highly experienced trainers she brought to Yinghua Academy. The Academic Director and the Director of Children, Families and Community Relationships also attended numerous trainings and conferences during the year. Specifically Dr. Luyi Lien's professional development plan included school management training and coaching for instructional staff, planning to implement PLCs, Differentiated Instruction and Responsive Classroom, cultural diversity, Chinese vocabulary building, schoolwide literacy, safety issues and parent community building. She received specific direction and coaching on effective immersion language instruction and pedagogy and administration from Dr. Mimi Met, Margaret Wong, and Ursina Swanson, and peer coaching with MESPA and with STARTALK site visitors. She implemented a new teacher training program and presented research at the national ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) conference.

Carl Schlueter, who joined Yinghua Academy in November, 2009, was the Director of Students, Families and Community Relationships in the 2010-11 school year. In this role he directed behavioral educational philosophy and practice at Yinghua Academy, coordinated enrichment and extracurricular activities, and community partnerships with individuals and organizations beyond the school. He implemented policies, programs and events that sustained safe, healthy and supportive relationships with students, families, and communities. He holds a Masters' Degree and has ten years' prior experience as an educator and school administrator at schools in Minnesota and Japan.

2010-2011 School Management and Faculty Information

(This table contains information for ALL members of the school management administrative team and also includes faculty employed by the school that did not serve as a classroom teacher (e.g. curriculum coordinators, social workers, counselors, administrative assistance, paraprofessionals, custodial, technology, librarians, etc.)

<u>Name</u>	<u>File Folder Number</u>	<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Years Employed by the School</u>	<u>Left During 10/11</u>	<u>Not Returning 11/12</u>
Betsy Lueth	397306	Executive Director	5	x	x
Ursina Swanson	346803	Interim Executive Director	<1		
Luyi Lien		Academic Director	5		
Carl Schlueter		Director of Students, Families, and Community Relationships	2		x
Rob Tebandeke		Business Coordinator	1		
Jennifer Olsen		Curriculum Assistant	3		
Dave Waldoch		Facilities/Technology Coordinator	3		
Chemin Chu		Tech Coordinator	2		
Karen Calcaterra		Grant Administrator	2		
Elizabeth Fei		Administrative Assistant	1	x	x
Mary Jo Feely		Nurse	3		
Ngoc Thai		Health Aide	<1	x	x
De Hanuman	458704	Behavioral Specialist	3		
Sandy Luger		Food Service Coordinator	5		x
Helen Hindrawati		Food Service Assistant	1		
Marsha Andrews		Aftercare/Enrichment Director/Health Aide/Administrative Assistant	2		
Ruby Liou		Special Education Paraprofessional	2		
Joyce Lu		Lunch Monitor/Yinghua Care Staff	3		
Meghann Murphy	450365	ELL/ELA EA Sub	1		x
Nuermanguli Maimaiti	998375	Kindergarten EA	2		
Jingzi Xu	997936	Kindergarten EA	1		
Yi Li		Kindergarten EA	1		
Philip Morris	459610	English EA	2		
Vickie Nelson		English EA	2		
Chih-Jou Hsu		Assessment Coordinator	1		
Pearl Cheng Chen		Yinghua Care Staff	2		
Margaret Kao		Yinghua Care Staff	2		
Sandy Pan		Yinghua Care Staff	2		

4. STAFFING/TEACHING FACULTY INFORMATION

The Yinghua Academy teaching staff is selected using a three-tiered interview process; first interview with hiring committee, second interview teaching a model lesson, and the final interview with the administrative team to review policies and procedures, salary and benefit information, and job description.

Once a teacher or other educational staff member is employed at Yinghua, she/he is evaluated three times in the year. Yinghua Academy teachers are also asked to give weekly lesson plans to the Academic Director for review, and participate in monthly curriculum map “check-ins.” All staff also participate in weekly curriculum planning meetings and preparatory time.

Teaching staff for the 2010-2011 school year:

<u>Name</u>	<u>File Folder Number</u>	<u>Assignment/Subject</u>	<u>Years Employed by the School</u>	<u>Left During 10/11</u>	<u>Not Returning 11/12</u>
Na-ling Faust	998008	Kindergarten Classroom Teacher	1		x
Qin Fang	998233	Kindergarten Classroom Teacher	3		x
Hsiu-Yu Yang	447466	Kindergarten Classroom Teacher	2		
Hueiling Chen	998258	First Grade Classroom Teacher	3		x
Fangwen Yeh	998373	First Grade Classroom Teacher	4		x
Kuangchi Lee	456408	First Grade Classroom Teacher	1		x
Victoria Chai	998022	Second Grade Classroom Teacher	1		
Fang Wu	998091	Second Grade Classroom Teacher	2		
Hua-Ying Hsu	998006	Second Grade Classroom Teacher	1		x
Shu-Mei Lai	998232	Third Grade Classroom Teacher	3		
Ya-ching Chang	998005	Third Grade Classroom Teacher	1		
Li Chen Lin	998126	Fourth Grade Classroom Teacher	2		
Ping Chen	998004	Fourth Grade Classroom Teacher	2		
Yi-ling Han	998036	Fifth Grade Classroom Teacher	2		x
Ruth Hansen	416221	English Teacher	1		
John Vik	374375	4 th and 5 th Grade English Teacher	3	x	x
Carolina Viveros-Michael	460616	4 th and 5 th Grade English Teacher, Middle School Spanish	<1		x
Keri Norell	403746	Sixth Grade Classroom Teacher/Middle School ELA	5		

Jenessa Van Schooneveld	423515	English Teacher and Curriculum Coordinator	3		x
Pei-chun Liu	997959	Media Teacher	1	x	x
Donghua Lu	997961	Chinese Language Arts Teacher	1		x
Sarah Henning	435770	Music Teacher	2		
Lucy Liu	998002	Middle School Chinese Language Arts Teacher	1		x
Emily Dunlap	439250	Middle School Social Studies Teacher	<1	x	x
Maggie Lu	997960	Middle School Math Teacher	<1	x	x
Kari Kalsow	451978	Middle School Math/Science/Social Studies	<1		
Yu-Cheng Yao	998035	Middle School Science Teacher/EA	<1		x
Erica Carlson	423297	Art Teacher	1		x
Andy Henderson	442818	Physical Ed. Teacher	3		
Kenny Chan	442174	Special Education LD/EBD/ECSE	3		x
Lisa Bonine	441614	Special Education	1		x
Taoyuan Li	377724	Speech and Language Pathologist	3		

5. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

Yinghua Academy follows all Minnesota statutes as they relate to application and admission procedures for public elementary schools. We do not discriminate in any way and all activities follow our adopted policy #102 Equal Educational Opportunity. Enrollment is open to all students residing in any school district in Minnesota. We have an open application period for five to six weeks during January and February for the fall of the next school year. We will accept all applications without question, unless the child does not meet the minimum age requirement for Kindergarten as set by the school board prior to the application period. For the 2010/2011 school year, a child was required to be 5 on or before September 1, 2010 in order to begin Kindergarten. All procedures and timing in regards to our application period is posted on our website as well as explained through several public open houses.

If more applications are received for a grade level than space is available, Yinghua Academy holds a public lottery. The lottery is completely random. Yinghua does honor sibling preference as an allowable practice, and enrolls children of the school's teachers before accepting other students by lot. No other preference is given. Students are also randomly ranked for a waiting list if applicable. Applications received after the open application period are considered on a first-come first-serve basis. All applications are time- and date-stamped upon receipt in the main office.

Student Enrollment and Attrition Rates

School Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Attrition / Retention Rates
2008-09	75	48	50	24	25	16				8%/92%
2009-10	75	75	50	45	25	23	12			11%/89%
2010-11	75	75	75	50	44	24	24	12		8%/92%
2011-12 (est.)	100	75	76	72	43	40	23	23	9	10%/90%

Student enrollment has been increasing every year as the school expands to K-8 grade, and as the impact of adding additional kindergarten sections in 2008 and 2011 grow the student population.

This year, Yinghua Academy has altered how it calculates and tracks student attrition rates, because, as an immersion school, we want to capture the impact of attrition on class size over time, and identify patterns and trends. In this case, we compare the total number of students who leave each year as compared to the original or Initial Class size and all those added into the class over the years.

$$\text{Program Class Of Attrition} = \frac{\text{Total number of Students Transferred Out}}{\text{Initial Class Size} + \text{Added students per year}} \times 100$$

Yinghua's opening school year was 2006-07 where full immersion was taught in K-1 grades. Grades 2 and 3 of that year were not full immersion (Class Of 2016 & 2017). By the 2007-08 school year, we had our first student retention data.

Student Retention Rates by Class:

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
8 th grade class (class of 2016)	72%	71%	45%	42%	18%
7 th grade class (class of 2017)	100%	90%	86%	86%	56%
6 th grade class (class of 2018)	95%	88%	85%	82%	75%
5 th grade class (class of 2019)	85%	84%	76%	68%	64%
4 th grade class (class of 2020)		92%	85%	81%	68%
3 rd grade class (class of 2021)			96%	90%	83%
2 nd grade class (class of 2022)				96%	87%
1 st grade class (class of 2023)					95%

From our data, we are able to see student retention rates over time by grade and year, which enables analysis of immersion trends. Over the course of 5 years' experience, in movement from K-1, the average retention of students is 92.6%, from 1-2 average retention is 88.2%, from 2-3 average retention is 85.6%, from 3-4 average retention is 76.6%, 4-5 average retention is 75.75%, and from 5-6 average retention is 68.66%.

Student Demographics for 2010-11:

- Students attended from 64 metro zip codes, including urban, suburban and rural areas.
- Ethnicity: 47% Asian, 45% Caucasian, 3% African American, 3% Hispanic/Latino, 1% Native American, and 1% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

- 5% were identified as ELL, and less than 3% were heritage speakers of Chinese.
- 13% qualified to receive free or reduced lunch.
- 10% were identified as receiving special education services.

6. ACADEMIC PROGRAM / PERFORMANCE

Yinghua Academy is a Chinese immersion school, with kindergarten through 5th grades following a full Mandarin Chinese early immersion program, with most content delivered in Mandarin Chinese, with the exception of some specialist programming and English language arts added in 2nd grade and above. In 2011 the Yinghua Academy School Board voted to add an additional section of kindergarten students, so for the 2011-12 school year there are now 4 kindergarten classes, three class sections in grades 1-3, 2 classes each in grades 4 and 5, one class in grade 6, and a combined 7/8 grade class.

Rigorous academic programming is a critical part of all curriculum design and implementation. Yinghua Academy teachers participate in significant hours of training, including 15 professional development days during the school year, to ensure that all instruction is delivered based on the best practices of immersion and foreign language research and the Core Knowledge sequence. The curriculum designed by our academic director and teachers is aligned with state and national standards and incorporates best-practice research. At time of writing this Annual Report, the Yinghua Academy School Report Card for 2010-11 was not yet made available through the MDE website, but it should be available after October 1, 2011 at <http://education.state.mn.us/ReportCard2005/index.do>

Academic Goals

Specific measurable goals for academic performance were set with our contract Authorizer, and include:

1) Absolute proficiency: Friends of Education measures the percentage of students who meet or exceed state standards for.

MCA Math Goals: 70% of all students enrolled for three years will score at least proficient by the third grade, and 75% of all students will score at least proficient by the fifth grade. *Result*: 75.6% of third grade students and 90.9% of fifth grade students enrolled at Yinghua Academy for three years met or exceeded proficiency.

MCA Reading Goals: 70% of all students enrolled for three years will score at least proficient by the third grade, and 75% of all students will score at least proficient by the fifth grade. *Result*: 68.3% of third grade students and 95.5% of fifth grade students enrolled at Yinghua Academy for three years met or exceeded proficiency.

MCA Science Goal: 65% of all students enrolled at the school for three years will score at least proficient in fifth grade. *Result*: 72.7% of all students enrolled at Yinghua Academy for three years met proficiency goals.

NWEA Measures of Academic Progress Goals: 85% of continuously enrolled students will meet or exceed targeted RIT growth in math. 80% of continuously enrolled students will meet or exceed targeted RIT growth in reading. *Result*: 81.5% met or exceeded their targeted RIT growth in math, 69% met or exceeded their targeted RIT growth in reading.

2) Comparative proficiency: Friends of Education expects its charter schools to meet or exceed local district performance, measuring the school's proficiency against the proficiency of the local traditional district school. *Result*: Overall as a school, 83% of all Yinghua Academy students in grades 3-7 achieved a score of Meets or Exceeds Standards in mathematics, and 85% achieved a score of Meets or Exceeds Standards in English reading, and 67% of 5th grade students achieved a score of Meets or Exceeds Standards in Science Proficiency. In Minneapolis school district in 2010, 53% met or exceeded in math, 52% in reading, and 25% in science.

3) Growth: Friends of Education expects all students attending its charter schools to demonstrate adequate growth performance in the MCA, and compares this information with the performance of students at the traditional district. *Result*: In 2010, Yinghua Academy students MCA adequate growth performance in math was 88.5% and Minneapolis district was 49.7%. Yinghua students' adequate growth

performance in reading was 71.4%, and Minneapolis District was 54.7% Yinghua Academy was the highest Friends of Education charter school in terms of MCA math adequate growth performance in 2010.

Instructional Goals

Instructional goals for the school year included:

- 1) Establish a continuous improvement process using standards such as MN School of Excellence criteria.
 - Grade level and subject-alike teacher teams meet weekly in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to analyze and align the Yinghua Academy Math, Science and Language Arts curriculum to the MN state standards. PLC teams will develop common outcomes and common assessments for these subject areas.
 - All teachers will be trained in and utilize best-practice immersion teaching strategies, such as use of centers, role play, visuals, increased opportunities for peer-to-peer interactions in Chinese, exclusive use of Chinese in immersion classrooms and hallways, attention to comprehensive input and checking for understanding.
 - Chinese Language Arts and English Language Arts teachers collaborate on the teaching of Language Arts skills.
 - Specialist teachers and core subject teachers collaborate to integrate subjects more broadly across the curriculum.
- 2) Establish a process that allows student test data to be collected and analyzed to inform instruction.
 - Identify test instruments that will be utilized, determine timeframe for testing dates, and establish processes for data collection.
 - Ensure test data are disseminated to teachers and parents in a timely manner.
 - Teachers receive training in data analysis to inform their instruction and to address students' learning needs as they collaborate in PLCs.
 - NWEA test data will be collected and analyzed each spring to determine student achievement and growth.
- 3) Develop an ongoing, focused, job-embedded Professional Development Program
 - Ensure all teachers are trained, knowledgeable, and utilize Differentiated Instruction strategies. Develop a peer mentoring/coaching model with a focus on Differentiated Instruction, with the help and guidance of Dr. Diane Heacox.
 - Provide ongoing training in immersion teaching strategies.
 - Maintain a staff and school climate that is knowledgeable and respectful of different cultural perspectives.
 - Provide training and begin functioning as a Professional Learning Community at grade levels.
 - All teachers and support staff trained in Responsive Classroom and Developmental Design as appropriate, and integrating Responsive Classroom into all aspects of school life.
 - Technology integration is taught, and teachers implement in their classrooms. SmartBoard training is on-going.
 - Shared folder on YA server is available to all teaching staff, listing all school materials and curricula.
- 4) Provide Guidance and monitoring of teacher licensure process.
 - Ensure all non-licensed teachers are making progress towards obtaining licensure.
 - Assist new teachers with the identification of university licensure programs.

Non-Academic Goals

Some specific measurable goals for academic performance were set with our contract Authorizer, and include:

- 1) The school will maintain at least a 95% attendance rate. *Result:* The attendance rate for 2010-11 was 96%.

2) Satisfaction surveys:

Parent Satisfaction: at least 80% of parents returning the annual survey will indicate overall satisfaction with the school. Result: According to an online survey of parents conducted April-May, 2011, of 185 respondents, 86% reported being satisfied overall with Yinghua Academy.

Staff Satisfaction: at least 80% of all staff returning the annual survey will indicate overall satisfaction at the school. Result: In a staff survey conducted in June, 2011, 38% of 21 respondents indicated they were happy working at Yinghua Academy.

Additional non-academic goals being developed by administration for the 2011-12 school year include:

1) Parent volunteerism: while 550 parents contributed over 3400 volunteer hours in the 2010-11 school year, the administration has set the expectation that all parents contribute 4 volunteer hours in 2011-12.

2) Behavioral—Administration is gathering qualitative data on the implementation of Responsive Classroom and reduction in behavioral referrals

3) Service learning projects in the middle school

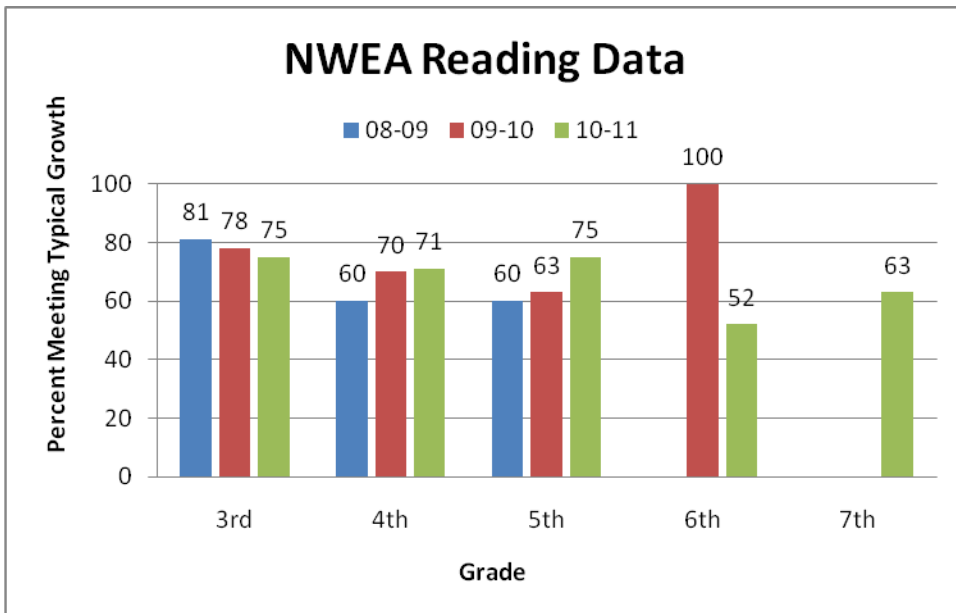
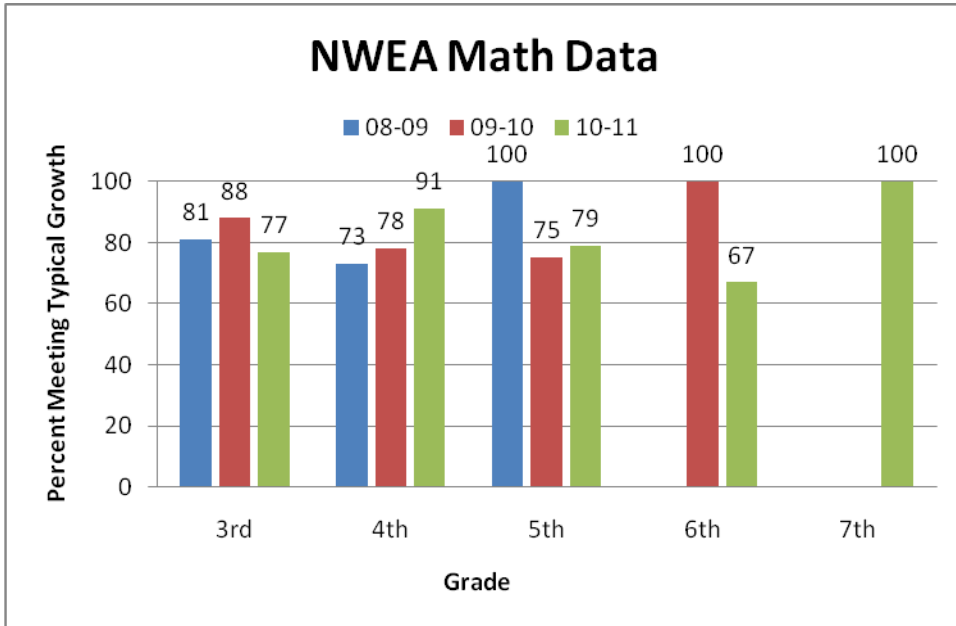
4) Improving school health and wellness policies and schoolwide initiatives fostering student wellness, including General Mills “Champions for Healthy Kids” grant initiative and application for US Healthier Schools Challenge Gold Distinction Award.

Assessment and Accountability Data

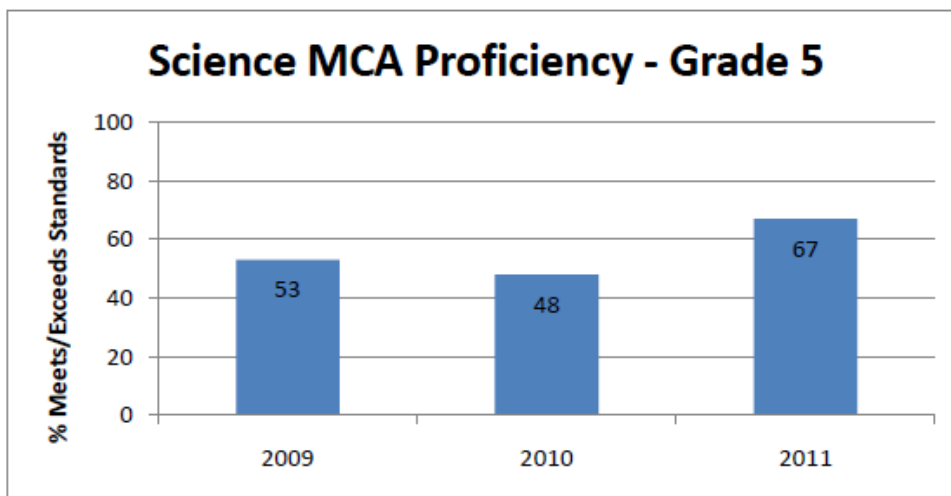
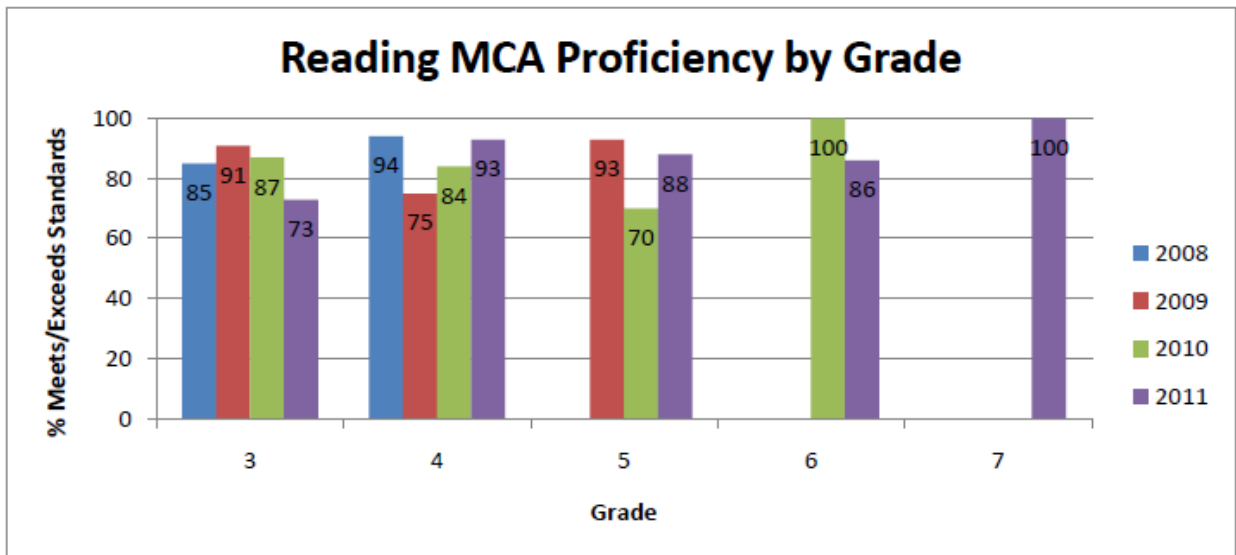
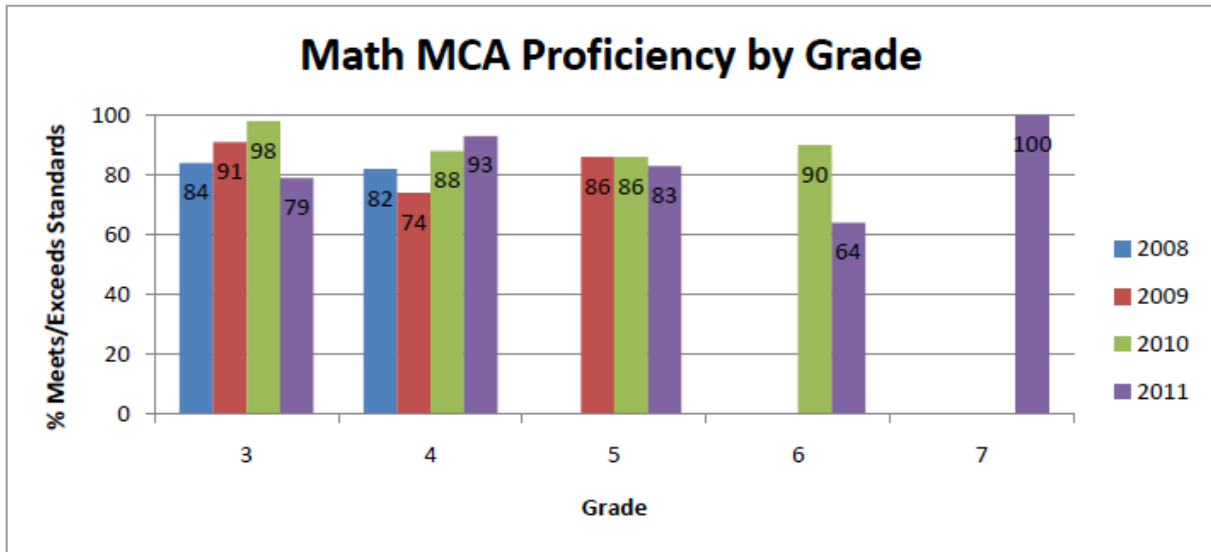
Yinghua Academy uses a variety of assessments to measure student achievement, including standardized tests, student academic performance-based assessments, portfolios of student work, and teacher observation and classroom-based assessment. Throughout the school year, educational staff continued to work with the Academic Director to develop units and lessons in accordance with the curriculum map as well as collect data on academic achievement in the areas of Chinese and English language arts, math and science. The following standardized testing occurred for the 2010-11 school year:

- NWEA, Grades K-7 (three times/year)
- Statewide MCA-II for grades 3-7 in math and reading, 5th grade science
- SOPA (Student Oral Proficiency Assessment) for K to establish a baseline, and grades 5-7
- Youth Chinese Test (YCT) Assessment of student Chinese reading and listening comprehension, grades 2-7 (once per year)
- All ELL students participated in MN-SOLOM tests, and ELL students in grades 3 and above took the TEAE test.

Standardized Testing Results
NWEA Growth



MCA-II



SOPA (Student Oral Proficiency Assessment) in Mandarin Chinese

The SOPA 9-point scale is:

- 1- Junior Novice Low
- 2- Junior Novice Mid
- 3- Junior Novice High
- 4- Junior Intermediate Low
- 5- Junior Intermediate Mid
- 6- Junior Intermediate High
- 7- Junior Advanced Low
- 8- Junior Advanced Mid
- 9- Junior Advanced High

SOPA Results 2008-2011

Grades	Student Average		
	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
K	2.58	2.5	3.16
1	2.98	3.74	-
2	4.33	4.94	-
3	6.14	5.42	-
4	1.99	4.81	-
5	3.33	2.64	5.99
6	-	4.85	3.93
7	-	-	4.76

YCT (Youth Chinese Test)

In spring, 2011, students in 2-7th grades at Yinghua Academy took the Youth Chinese Test (YCT) administered by the Confucius Institute of Minnesota. The YCT is a standardized test developed by the office of the Hanban, the government office in the People's Republic of China responsible for the study of Chinese worldwide. It assesses student listening comprehension and reading in Chinese, and additionally, at the level 4 test, Chinese writing ability.

The test levels are as follows:

Level 1	80 commonly used words and related grammar patterns
Level 2	150 commonly used words and related grammar patterns
Level 3	300 commonly used words and related grammar patterns
Level 4	600 commonly used words and related grammar patterns

YCT Results 2010-11

Grade	Level	Number of students	Number of passing students	Passing rate	Combined passing rate
2nd	1	9	9	100%	99%
	2	62	61	98%	
3rd	1	4	4	100%	100%
	2	12	12	100%	
	3	33	33	100%	
4th	1	3	3	100%	100%
	2	1	1	100%	
	3	6	6	100%	
5th	1	3	3	100%	92%
	2	1	1	100%	
	3	1	1	100%	
	4	19	17	89%	
6th	1	4	4	100%	100%
	2	15	15	100%	
	4	2	2	100%	
7th	1	2	2	100%	100%
	2	6	6	100%	
Total		183	180	98%	

7. INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Yinghua Academy established the first Chinese immersion program in the state of Minnesota. Yinghua Academy Chinese language teachers, under the direction of the Academic Director, employ and share innovative and creative immersion teaching techniques and strategies, by implementing the Core Knowledge Sequence in content-based instruction in Mandarin Chinese. Immersion methodology, combining language learning with content-based instruction, requires immersion teachers to employ innovative immersion teaching techniques, such as:

- Making input comprehensible by using gestures, intonation, pantomime demonstration, pictures, real objects, Total Physical Response (TPR) and routines;
- Promote student use of language by incorporating songs, drama, read aloud, show and share, writing experiences, multisensory techniques, and think-pair-share strategies;
- Prepare language development lesson plans that incorporate a content and language objective for each language;
- Make content understandable through graphic organizers, defining content vocabulary, and spiraling content, reinforcing concepts in many different ways.

All Yinghua Academy teachers are trained in these techniques and contribute to the highly proficient rates of Chinese language ability our students attain. By having all students immersed in the Chinese

language and culture, all students are becoming conversant and literate in the language. In 2011, immersion Kindergarten students at the end the year on average scored Junior Novice High, and immersion fifth grade students scored Junior Intermediate High using the CAL (Center for Applied Linguistics) Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA) tool.

Yinghua Academy also supported Chinese language and cultural learning by hosting cultural events, providing student performances for the Chinese New Year annual celebration, and through international collaboration with sister schools in China, including middle school teleconferencing with the Number 8 Middle School in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia which began in 2010-11.

Other innovative practices implemented during 2010-11 include middle school electives, service learning projects, and clubs, learning opportunities for students through Artistic Partnerships and residencies, field trips, before and after-care which included tutoring support and a before-school English language reading program, enrichment and athletic activities, and student wellness policies and initiatives focused on youth well-being and safety, as well as nutrition and exercise, such as active recess, which are research-based practices to improve student attentiveness and facilitate learning.

Yinghua Academy has been innovative in creating professional development opportunities for teachers, as 63% of Yinghua Academy teachers in 2010 were teaching with Community Expert waivers with permission to teach from the Minnesota Board of Teaching. Yinghua teachers received training in a variety of areas, including immersion, differentiated instruction, classroom management and Responsive Classroom, student behavioral management, data-driven instruction, incorporation of technology in the classroom, action research, and employing backward design. Teachers have had opportunity for leadership and professional growth as mentors, team leads, and participants in curriculum planning and development, and action research projects. Teachers participate in school governance as School Board members, assume leadership roles with QComp teacher incentive program and Q-Comp teams, use data to increase student achievement, and employ new center-based, experiential learning/teaching techniques in a summer camp instructional setting. In this year's STARTALK-funded summer teacher training program, veteran teachers provided training to 12 new or novice Chinese immersion educators, sharing expertise, research, curricula and best practices in immersion education. In the past school year, several teachers have presented at national conferences such as STARTALK and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages conference held in Boston, MA.

8. **PROGRAM CHALLENGES:**

The most significant program challenge is staffing Yinghua Academy with professional instructional staff who can teach in the Chinese language. Yinghua Academy hired 13 new teaching staff for the 2010-11 school year, and assisting these new teachers not only with the issues surrounding being a new hire, but also with settling in to life in Minnesota and adjusting to the structures of an American school, required upfront training and assistance by the more veteran teachers and administration. This challenge is ongoing for Yinghua Academy as it continues to grow, with 10 new Chinese teachers in immersion classrooms hired for 2011-12. Further challenges which continually are being addressed are organizational structure, including hiring processes and supervision, the professional development and training needs of staff, and retaining quality teachers. After making a large upfront financial commitment in sponsoring teachers and obtaining visas, Yinghua Academy has a vested interest in teacher retention, and preventing the transfer of trained staff to other districts and programs in the metro area.

As Yinghua Academy continued to grow into a middle school in 2010-11, Yinghua faced the ongoing curriculum challenges of developing content in Chinese based on MN standards at each level and

academic subject, creating academically rigorous maps and rubrics, and middle school content programming. This challenge is constantly being addressed by the Academic Director and curriculum teams, and authentic classroom support materials for instruction are obtained on an ongoing basis.

Facility and space challenges continue, as rapid enrollment means Yinghua Academy is outgrowing its current school building.

9. **FINANCES**

Yinghua Academy remained in a position of strong financial health throughout the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2011 ("Fiscal Year 2011"). We successfully managed through the financial implications our significant growth with prudent spending controls. Our Fiscal Year 2011 surplus was \$40,355, a 440% increase from our Fiscal Year 2010 surplus. This resulted in a fund balance increase of 9.8%. Our June 30, 2011 fund balance was \$450,500, representing a 12.5% fund balance percentage.

Yinghua Academy continues to benefit from grants which contribute to expanding our Chinese language immersion education programming from Kindergarten through Eighth Grade. In Fiscal Year 2011, we completed the second year of a three-year Foreign Language Assistance Program ("FLAP") grant and obtained our third annual STARTALK grant. We also benefit from gifts and donations received from the broader Yinghua community, including Yinghua families. Donations and gifts totaled nearly \$93,000 in Fiscal Year 2011.

Our prudent financial practices allowed us to manage successfully through the 30% Minnesota aid holdback we faced during Fiscal Year 2011. Further, we leveraged a \$350,000 bank line of credit to manage cash flow needs as required. Spending controls and diligence allowed us to minimize use of the line of credit. We incurred only \$3,500 of interest expense on the line of credit during the year.

The Yinghua Academy Board is actively involved in the oversight of the school's financial matters, regularly receiving budget-to-actual reports, reviewing and discussing specific expenditure items, and reviewing bank account statements. We maintain strong internal controls, including clear separation of duties, both at the school as well as with and at our contracted business manager, Beltz, Kez, Darling & Associates. Our Fiscal Year 2010 audit was Unqualified with no Material Weaknesses or Significant Deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting identified. As a result, no audit response or corrective actions were required to be undertaken by Yinghua Academy. Further, in Fiscal Year 2010 we completed a Federal Grant compliance audit, required because of the Federal dollars received by Yinghua through the FLAP grant as well as Title VIII Stabilization Aid. We also received an Unqualified opinion on the Federal audit, with no Material Weaknesses or Significant Deficiencies identified in our internal controls over major programs.

Following is a summary of Yinghua Academy's original budget, last revised budget, and actual (unaudited) financial results for Fiscal Year 2011 as well as our financial position at June 30, 2011. The original and last revised budgets were approved by the Yinghua Academy Board on March 18, 2010 and May 16, 2011, respectively.

Yinghua Academy has received the State of Minnesota School Finance Award every year in which it was eligible to receive it: 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Yinghua Academy
Statement of Revenue and Expenditures
For the year ended June 30, 2011

	Original Budget	Revised Budget	Actual (Unaudited)
<u>Revenues:</u>			
- State Revenues	\$ 2,836,827	\$ 2,705,819	\$ 2,712,514
- Federal Revenues	79,881	150,540	138,496
- Grants	431,010	377,143	287,253
- Other Revenues	13,400	46,500	56,551
- Donations and Gifts	56,500	86,000	92,888
- Food Service	254,600	254,600	137,680
- Community Service (Yinghua Care)	255,500	268,000	218,263
Total Revenues:	3,927,718	3,888,602	3,643,645
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
- Salaries and Benefits	1,769,429	1,729,610	1,698,787
- Building Lease and Operating Expenses	614,423	623,919	624,027
- Programming, General & Administrative	1,106,797	1,030,970	936,283
- Food Service	261,600	259,600	137,680
- Community Service (Yinghua Care)	168,000	240,500	206,533
Total Expenditures:	3,920,249	3,884,599	3,603,310
	-	-	-
Surplus (Deficit):	7,469	4,003	40,335
<u>Fund Balance:</u>			
- Beginning Fund Balance	410,165	410,165	410,165
- Add: Surplus (Deficit)	7,469	4,003	40,335
- Ending Fund Balance	417,634	414,168	450,500
Fund Balance Percentage:	10.7%	10.7%	12.5%

Yinghua Academy Balance Sheet As of June 30, 2011 (unaudited)
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Assets:

- Cash	\$	33,469
- Accounts Receivable		420
- State Aid Receivable		754,517
- Federal Aid Receivable		29,926
- Prepaid Expenses and Deposits		89,007
Total Assets:		907,339

Liabilities:

- Salaries and Wages Payable		130,338
- Line of Credit		100,000
- Accounts Payable		48,035
- Payroll Deductions/Benefits Payable		31,651
- Deferred Revenue		146,815
Total Liabilities:		456,839

Fund Balance: **450,500**

10. **AUTHORIZER**

Yinghua Academy's charter Authorizer is Friends of Education. In the spring of 2010, the State of Minnesota renewed the status of Friends of Education as an authorizer of charter schools. Friends of Education therefore is one of the first charter school authorizers to meet the new Department of Education criteria for authorizers, including stricter financial and academic controls and adherence to national standards for charter school oversight and quality. Friends can be contacted at: Friends of Education, 200 East Lake Street, Wayzata, MN 55391 or info@improveK-12education.org. Contact information for our Authorizer liaison is R.E. Topoluk: Phone 952.745.2717, Fax 952-745-2739, Email: topoluk@tcfbank.com.

Yinghua Academy's current charter contract effective July 1, 2011 was renewed for the maximum three-year period: our current charter contract with Friends of Education expires on June 30, 2014.

Friends of Education Oversight Program

Friends of Education ("Friends") monitors the three critical areas of charter school operations: academic performance, finance, and reporting and legal compliance. The monitoring program is described below.

1. Academic Performance. Monitoring academic performance occurs through three basic avenues: testing, site visits, and review of annual reports.
 - (a) Testing. Friends requires regular testing to measure student performance, and student performance results must meet or exceed the results required by non-chartered public school students. The testing required by Friends is set forth in its

charter contract with its schools. Generally, however, testing data is reviewed each semester to ensure that the goals of the schools are being met, both in terms of individual student performance and for the school as a whole. Testing data is compared with other schools to measure performance.

- (b) **Site Visits.** Friends engages in both unannounced and scheduled site visits. In addition to general observation and classroom visits, site visits may include interviews with the school leader, business manager, selected school teachers, students, and available parents and board members. Friends site visits also include an analysis as to whether the facility, school climate, and learning program constitute an effective learning environment promoting the academic goals. Friends provides feedback following each site visit; feedback may be oral and/or written.
- (c) **Annual Reports.** Friends requires that the school prepare an annual report which details the school's evaluation of meeting each its academic performance goals.

To assist with its sponsoring responsibilities with respect to academic performance, Friends has contracted with the Minnesota Humanities Commission. The Commission's staff has assisted in the implementation of academic programs at over thirty schools in Minnesota over the past ten years. Through its contract with the Minnesota Humanities Commission, the Commission assists with monitoring the implementation of the academic program at each school. Friends has also implemented a support network for the schools it is sponsoring to engage in mutual support and problem solving.

- 2. **Finance.** Friends' oversight of financial affairs is accomplished primarily through a review of financial statements and the independent audit.

- (a) **Financial Statements.** Prior to the July 1st before school opening, the school must submit to Friends an annual budget adopted by the School Board.

The school must also submit monthly financial statements to Friends as well as cash flow projections when requested by Friends. The financial statements must contain budget and actual expenses and contain explanations for all items exceeding budget and the manner in which the excess items will be resolved. Friends strongly encourages that its sponsored schools utilize a recognized provider of accounting services for charter schools in the initial years of operation.

- (b) **Independent Audit.** By the date specified in its charter contract, the school must submit to Friends its independent audit report along with any school management response.

As a secondary mechanism to monitor financial affairs, site visit interviews with the school business manager and board members may reveal financial concerns.

- 3. **Reporting and Legal Compliance.** Friends' oversight of reporting and general legal compliance is accomplished primarily through review of documentation, site visits, and communication with the Department of Education.

- (a) **Governance.** The school must submit board meeting minutes to Friends on a timely basis, generally prior to the next scheduled school board meeting. Friends may attend board meetings on either an announced or unannounced basis and is available to attend specific meetings upon request by the school.

- (b) **Annual Reports.** Friends requires each school to submit an annual report which details the school's evaluation of meeting State reporting requirements.

- (c) Site Visits. Friends engages in both unannounced and scheduled site visits. In addition to general observation and classroom visits, site visits may include interviews with the school leader, business manager, selected school teachers, students, and available parents and board members. Site visits may also include a review of pertinent files. General observation, interviews, and review of selected files during site visits facilitate determination by Friends of the school's general compliance, including compliance with the Minnesota Open Meetings Law, Public Employment Relations Act, teacher licensing requirements, student immunization compliance, Minnesota Human Rights Act, Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minnesota Public Schools Fee Law, special education requirements, financial controls, and open enrollment processes.

Friends has asked that the Minnesota Department of Education inform Friends if the school is not reporting properly and to share copies of all pertinent correspondence between the school and the MDE. Friends adopts a similar procedure regarding compliance with local, State and Federal laws.

Remediation. Should a sponsored school fall short of its agreed-upon academic standards, financial targets, or fail in any aspect of reporting and legal compliance, Friends engages in a range of possible interventions including:

- Friends notifies the school leader or board chair of areas of concern
- Friends formally notifies the school board of areas of concern and may ask that the school board develop a performance improvement plan
- Friends initiates a notice and action plan whereby Friends states its intention to revoke sponsorship.

Friends complies with all state requirements regarding sponsorship withdrawal.

Yinghua Academy Compliance with Applicable Laws and MDE Requirements

Yinghua Academy complies with all applicable laws, with the school board at times seeking legal counsel to ensure compliance as questions arise. Yinghua Academy has been shown to be in compliance with laws as complaints have been brought forward. A partial listing of the legal requirements and laws with which Yinghua Academy complies include:

1. Open Meeting Law, Minn. Stat. 13D
2. Educational Data, Minn. Stat. 13.32
3. Educational Records, Minn. Stat. 120A.22 Subd. 7
4. Equal Opportunities in Athletic Programs, Minn. Stat. 121A.04
5. The Pledge of Allegiance Requirement, Minn. Stat. 121A.11 Subd. 3
6. The Pupil Fair Dismissal Act, Minn. Stat. 121A.40 – 121A.56
7. Receipt of Records, Minn. Stat. 121A.75
8. Teacher Licensure, Minn. Stat. 122A.15 Subd. 1
9. The Minnesota Public School Fee Law, Minn. Stat. 123B.34 – 123B.39
10. Financial audits, audit procedures and audit requirements, Minn. Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 6(a)
11. Charter School Board, Minn. Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 4(g)
12. Nonsectarian operations and affiliations, Minn. Stat. 124D.10, Subd. 8 (c)
13. The charter school's primary focus, Minn. Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 8(e)
14. Tuition, Minn. Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 8(f)
15. Student Admission, Minn. Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 9
16. Length of School Year, Minn. Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 13
17. Annual Report, Minn. Stat. 124D.10, Subd. 14
18. Information required by and submitted to the sponsor, Minn. Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 14
19. Provisions for transportation of pupils enrolled at the school, Minn. Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 16
20. Formation and operation of a charter school, Minn. Stat. 124D.10 Subd. 19
21. Types/amounts of insurance coverages to be obtained by the charter school, Minn. Stat. 124D.10 Subds. 6, 25
22. Charter School Revenue, Minn. Stat. 124D.11

23. Education of pupils with a disability, Minn. Stat. 125A.02, 125A.03 – 125A.24, 125A.65
24. Student Legal Records, Minn. Stat. 250B.171 Subds. 3, 5
25. Minnesota Cooperative Law, Minn. Stat. 308A
26. PSCPA, Teacher Retirement, and TRA, Minn. Stat. 353, 354, 354a
27. Nonprofit Corporations, Minn. Stat. 317A

Yinghua Academy is also working in compliance with MDE reporting and regulations, including submitting reports such as the annual report and participation in Q-comp, DIRS reporting, MARSS data, etc. Yinghua school representatives attended required MDE trainings. 100% of Yinghua Academy teachers had permission to teach from the State Board of Teaching.

Yinghua Academy followed state and local health and safety requirements and is compliant with fire code, inspections, and other safety requirements, and emergency drills have been conducted regularly. As Yinghua Academy makes progress on our expansion application, our administrators and school board have become aware of data system errors and gaps in our overall organization's knowledge of reporting systems and requirements. The steps we have taken to rectify these problems include the board's completion of an MDE and Friends obligation calendar, and close connection with MDE personnel to resolve any errors.

11. **FUTURE PLANS**

In Spring 2011, the entire school undertook a Board-led strategic planning process facilitated by Mike Felmler of the Prouty Project, which resulted in the Yinghua Academy strategic plan approved by the Board in June 2011. Four areas of focus identified in the strategic plan are: Organizational Stability, School Culture and Community, Professional Development and Academics.

Organizational Sustainability

Efforts at establishing organizational sustainability and building capacities in the coming years are focused on four main areas: the recruitment of a full-time Executive Director, Financials, Enrollment and Facilities.

Recruiting a full-time executive: Yinghua's founding director concluded her service to the school in October, 2010. The school was fortunate to then retain Interim Executive Director Swanson who continued the school's excellent Chinese immersion teaching program. Mrs. Swanson came out of retirement after decades of work as a leader in immersion education to serve Yinghua Academy on a three-day-per-week temporary basis. Her leadership during this time has achieved many milestones: excellence in the immersion curriculum; leadership cultivation with key staff including Yinghua's Academic Director, Dr. Luyi Lien; articulation of the school's fledgling Middle School Program to continue students' Mandarin proficiency while preparing them for rigorous English language high school work; and adopting best teaching practices such as Responsive Classroom and Differentiated Instruction to increase the set of skills that Yinghua teachers draw upon in their classes. Finding the right lead executive to now carry the school forward is the most important part of the school's work toward organizational sustainability. In Summer 2011 the School Board hired Anne Rizzo of Recruiting Strategies, LLC, to begin the essential work of identifying candidates for lead executive of Yinghua Academy. The goal is to extend an offer to a highly qualified, experienced leader before the end of the 2011 calendar year.

Financials: The school will continue to draw upon the professional business management services of Beltz, Kes, Darling and Associates (BKDA). Yinghua Academy has won the School Finance Award every year it has been eligible for the honor and the school will continue to operate in such a way as to garner this honor in the future. Growing the school's fund balance to the authorizer-recommended 20-25% is an important goal that the school is working to achieve through streamlining work processes and good planning. Achieving this will help solidify the continuing viability of the school as it matures.

Enrollment: Growing the school's enrollment will also build organizational sustainability. In Fall 2011 the school admitted four class sections of kindergarteners for the first time. The School Board approved adding a fourth kindergarten class in February, 2011 to meet increasing demand and because strong

enrollment on the “front end” helps ensure adequate minimum enrollment—which was determined to be a minimum of 75 students per grade—in the Middle School years.

Facilities: In the summer of 2011, the current school building was significantly remodeled to gain space efficiencies to address crowding which Yinghua now faces in 2011-12. By January 2012 Yinghua Academy will submit an expansion application in the hopes of developing two sites in the short term (possibly for the next three years) while the school builds capital and identifies a location with approximately 110,000 square feet which would be able to house the full K-8 program with projected full enrollment in the years to come. The school board is working with J. Kou Vang, President of St. Paul-based JB Realty Co. Mr. Vang works with several area charter schools helping them to locate appropriate properties for their programs while working within the financial rubrics of charter schools.

Communication and School Culture

The School continues to work on defining and effectively communicating about the interconnected and cooperative roles of its constituent groups. Oversight, governance and planning are the role of the school board; fundraising and community-building programming are the role of YACA board in close cooperation with the school board; leadership, management and implementation are the role of the administration, and student and parent-focused classroom and office support are the work of teachers and staff. All of these elements work together for the effective use of resources in supporting the school's mission and program.

Rapid growth in the school population, from fewer than 100 students at opening, to 450 students currently, to as many as 750 students three years from now, creates communication challenges. In a smaller school setting, informal communication sufficiently addresses questions and concerns, while in a more populous school, communication practices need to be formalized and consistent. Better and more frequent use of classroom pages on the school website facilitates teacher-to-student and teacher-to-parent communication. More frequent and strategically planned parent education programming (such as lectures and workshops) increases parent understanding of such unique elements as immersion methodology and cultural variations between China and the United States and contributes to closely aligned mutual expectations between parents and staff. Establishing more formal communication patterns between stakeholders clarifies roles and patterns for effective communication and facilitates productive, respectful engagement.

Professional Development

Professional development for all staff creates a learning community in which adults as well as students learn and grow. Yinghua Academy offers professional development opportunities for instructional leadership, teachers and other staff members.

Teachers can polish their classroom management skills, expand their knowledge base, and become increasingly more effective in their teaching. By working toward completion of the Minnesota Department of Education licensing process for their grade level and/or subject area, teachers fulfill professional requirements that also benefit the school with their learning. An environment of learning and support for teachers and other staff contributes to Yinghua's ability to recruit and retain outstanding staff. Particular areas of focus in 2011-12 include in-depth training in Responsive Classroom and Differentiated Instruction, and the development of Professional Learning Communities.

Academics

Developing a robust middle school program to serve Mandarin immersion students during the important middle school years, and making continuous adjustments as needed in the elementary program, are top priorities for Yinghua Academy over the next three years. The school's first “full-immersion” class enters middle school in the 2011-2012 school year bringing with them the necessity of a curriculum which maintains Chinese language skills in addition to rigorous content and increased mastery and independence of study skills. Prior to the start of the 2011-12 school year, Yinghua aligned its science curriculum to meet new MN State Standards including biology in 7th grade and chemistry in 8th

grade. The school plans to add non-core enhancements, such as orchestra in 2011-12, and will explore adding choir and theater in future years. Also in 2011-12, Yinghua Academy is planning for middle school students to study abroad in China.

Continuous monitoring of the established K-5 curriculum reveals areas which could be improved. The school also will establish a standard protocol for using student assessment data to improve and inform instruction at all levels.

12. **NON-PROFIT STATUS**

Yinghua Academy has active nonprofit status as a 501 (c) 3 and is registered with the Office of the Minnesota Attorney General, which can be verified at:
<http://www.ag.state.mn.us/Charities/CharitySearch.asp> .