

Yinghua Academy Board

Minutes of Meeting on 6/25/07

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Cindy Moeller, Sandy Doubek, Michael VanKeulen, Margaret Wong

BOARD MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Doug Parish, Kristina Schatz, Larry Yan

DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Betsy Lueth

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Joe Yang (who was elected to the board and will be joining the board as of 7/1/07)

Ms. Moeller called the meeting to order at 6:45PM.

AGENDA

Ms. Wong made a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Doubek seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

MINUTES OF THE 6/4/07 BOARD MEETING

Mr. VanKeulen made a motion to approve the 6/4/07 minutes. Ms. Wong seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1) Enrollment Update

K – 49

1st – 46

2nd – 25

3rd – 18

4th – 11 (with 3 outstanding enrollment packets)

This represents a total of 149 enrolled students, not counting the outstanding enrollment packets.

2) Transportation

Letter to Yinghua Academy parents asking for them to waive their right to bus transportation during the 2007-2008 school year has been well-received. Ms. Doubek commented that the letter that Ms. Lueth sent home provided a comprehensive and compelling explanation for the board requesting that these parents sign a waiver. Ms. Lueth noted that not providing busing for the students who live in St. Paul, who represent only 10-15% of Yinghua students, will most likely make it possible to provide 2 days art and/or music and 2 days PE for all students. Several board members expressed their appreciation for having this flexibility and for being able to use these funds to make an even stronger academic program at Yinghua.

3) Staffing

Ms. Lueth is continuing to seek Educational Assistant candidates for the kindergarten classrooms. She also noted that she has received applications from many qualified people for the English Language Teacher position.

4) Potential Visit from the BBC World Service

Ms. Lueth and Ms. Moeller have been contacted by Dan Bittman, until recently the head of the Mandarin Chinese Project at the Minnesota Department of Education, about the BBC's interest in doing a spot on Yinghua Academy when the BBC visits Minnesota in July to do several stories about connections between Minnesota and China. The visit will most likely take place during the week of July 16.

5) Contact with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) in Washington, D.C.

CAL has asked Yinghua to collaborate with them on a K-5 curriculum and to critique a curriculum they have drafted.

6) Column for the CARLA Newsletter

CARLA (Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition at the U of M) has asked Luyi Lien, Yinghua Academy's Curriculum Coordinator, to write a column for publication in the spring of 2008.

7) Facilities

Construction in the building is going well. There is already a wall up, creating two 1st-grade classrooms. Also considerable work has been done in creating the new office/library/computer lab area, including the addition of two individual restrooms.

8) Helping Students Retain Their Knowledge through the Summer Months

Ms. Lueth has sent to all Yinghua students who were enrolled at the end of the school year, a CD that their teacher had recorded, which includes their teacher singing songs and telling stories that were used during the school year. Ms. Lueth has also arranged for Yinghua students to have access to an online workbook that is available on the *Better Chinese* website. In addition, Ms. Lueth recommended to parents a "summer bridge" book that is available at each grade level and that gives students the opportunity to practice the skills they learned during the year.

9) Office Manager

Ms. Lueth hired a new Office Manager, Rebecca

UPDATES/OLD BUSINESS

FINANCIAL

In Mr. Parish's absence, Ms. Lueth provided a brief update on the progress being made to ensure the school has appropriate segregation of duties. The volunteer auditors from Ameriprise have made several suggestions, which are currently being implemented, e.g., having the payroll be approved by both Ms. Lueth and Mr. Parish or Ms. Moeller before the paychecks are issued.

YACA

Ms. Doubek reported on the YACA board meeting that was held on Wednesday, June 20th. Ms. Doubek noted that the YACA board had decided to defer some discussion and decisions until the July board meeting, since three new members will be joining the YACA board.

Two parents have volunteered to be Volunteer Coordinators for Yinghua Academy. Though they will not be members of the YACA board, the YACA board is hoping that at least one of them will be able to attend each YACA board meeting in order to facilitate the coordination of volunteers. The Volunteer Coordinators will also work directly with Ms. Lueth on volunteer needs at the school. There was a brief discussion of the value of training for volunteers. Mr. VanKeulen offered to send Ms. Doubek a format for such a training so that she can share it with the YACA board.

Ms. Doubek also mentioned that the YACA board is considering bringing in speakers to its general membership meetings during the 2007-2008 school year.

The next YACA board meeting is scheduled for July 18th.

NEW BUSINESS

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Ms. Moeller and Ms. Lueth talked about their meeting with an attorney who specializes in intellectual property law. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues such as whether or not Yinghua Academy has created any intellectual property and, if so, what should be done to protect it. The attorney also pointed out that the school should be seeking permission to translate textbooks into Mandarin. Mr. VanKeulen commented that he believes that public schools may not be able to develop intellectual property, since any materials developed at the school have been paid for with public money. Ms. Moeller agreed to investigate this issue. Also the Yinghua Academy board will continue to develop knowledge about intellectual property issues.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION OF CHARTER SCHOOLS

The board discussed the value of becoming a member of MACS. Yinghua Academy is not currently a member. The cost of membership is approximately \$3000/year. Since the board did not have enough specific information at hand to make a thoughtful decision, Ms. Moeller agreed to send copies of the MACS membership information to all board members. A decision will be made at the 7/16/07 board meeting.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

The board discussed its current conflict of interest policy and explored whether or not to make any changes to the policy. The board agreed that the most important point is for board members to be open with the board and to bring to the board for discussion any situations that may suggest a conflict of interest or conflict of loyalty. The board will continue to work on the possibility of revising some of the wording of the Conflict of Interest policy.

BY-LAWS REVIEW

The board discussed and decided to make several small changes and corrections to the By-Laws, including clarifying the section on conference call participation in board meetings and making consistent the use of the term board member (rather than director) throughout the document. A grammatical correction was also made.

The board also clarified in the By-Laws that, following a board election in June, new board members will join the board as of July 1 and board members who were not re-elected will leave the board as of July 1. This point will be added to the last paragraph of section 3 of the By-Laws.

Ms. Doubek made a motion that the board approve the changes indicated above. Ms. Wong seconded. The board approved the motion unanimously.

CALENDAR FOR BOARD MEETINGS

Ms. Moeller suggested that, when the new board members join the board in July, the board review its meeting calendar and consider whether it might be better to meet on another night of the week, e.g., Thursday. The board also discussed using Skype as a way for board members who are out-of-town to attend board meetings.

Mr. VanKeulen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Doubek seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. The board then held a brief closed meeting to discuss a personnel matter.