

Yinghua Academy Board Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2009

Board Members in Attendance

Maryann Choy, Scott Jax, Taoyuan Li, Cindy Moeller (Chair), Naomi Mueller, Doug Parish (Treasurer) arrived at 6:55 p.m., Joe Yang, Abigail Pribbenow (Secretary), Janine Trutna

Board Members Not in Attendance

Keri Norell

Academic Director and Director Not in Attendance

Luyi Lien and Betsy Lueth traveling together in China

Director of Students, Families and Community Relations in Attendance

Carl Schlueter

YACA Representative in Attendance (Ex Officio, Non-Voting)

none

Public in Attendance

Joel O'Malley, prospective Yinghua parent

- I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER
Ms. Moeller called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

- II. APPROVALS
 - A. Agenda: A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda with a few additions. The motion carried.

 - B. October 28, 2009, Board Meeting Minutes: A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the October 28, 2009, board meeting minutes with changes.

- III. PUBLIC COMMENTS
There were no public comments.

- IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT (paper copy distributed)
 - A. Enrollment/Students

Enrollment is 303.
K 75 (15 on the waiting list)
1st 75 (9 waiting)
2nd 50 (1 waiting)
3rd 45 (5 openings)
4th 25 (1 waiting)
5th 22 (3 openings)
6th 11 (14 openings)

B. Curriculum

1. The school is concerned about the need to publish its well-designed curriculum which, since the 2007-08 school year, has contained all original material with no clip-art. Ms. Lueth has spoken with both Beth Topoluk and with federal granting agencies but is unsure as to the legal and financial procedures for curriculum publishing under a Yinghua copyright.

Ms. Lueth and Ms. Moeller spoke with an intellectual property (IP) attorney some time ago. Mr. Yang recommended that the school retain an IP attorney in order to move forward with publishing plans. Ms. Moeller noted that a board subcommittee on curriculum publishing may need to be formed.

At its next meeting the board will discuss the possibility of adding a curriculum committee and/or a committee regarding the publishing of curricular materials.

2. Ms. Lien will meet with a publisher in Singapore after the trip to China to discuss both new resources for Yinghua programs (mostly related to science) and to pursue the possibility of publishing the curriculum. In an arrangement of this sort, the school would receive a royalty.
3. Ms. Lueth has revisited the school-day schedule and will have a new schedule after winter break that allows 30 minutes of lunch time and recess time and rotates the specialists in such a way that students will have Physical Education at more frequent intervals. All specialist classes will be scheduled equally but at more frequent intervals than every two weeks.
4. Using grant funds, the school plans to purchase more curriculum resources during the visit to China.
5. Dave Waldoch and Chemin Chu (technology staff) visited the Cambridge, Minnesota, school district which currently has a technology-based Chinese sister-school program in its high school. Currently some classes meet simultaneously with the sister-school students through video-conferencing. A full technology-needs plan for increasing the technology largely in the upper grades and middle school will be developed by the first week of January for implementation in the spring. This will bring real-life communication opportunities to the curriculum.

C. Facilities

1. The heat continues to present a few problems with small repairs required to the boiler and compressors.
2. Snow removal arrangements are working well.
3. The electrical inspector and building inspectors have reviewed work by CSDC/Lee Companies and Building Assets. Permits are completed. The final amount for this transaction is being finalized. The school is currently under the original budget of \$225,000.
4. The outdoor sign layout needs to be reviewed and finalized by the school board.
5. Indoor signage is still in process.

6. The roof is fully repaired after some leakage in the gym earlier this year.
7. The flag pole has been replaced and is functioning.

D. Financial/Grant

1. The Confucius Classroom grant has been deposited.
2. Regular draws will begin on the FLAP grant with the first draw in the account on December 8, 2009, for \$19,000, leaving a remainder of \$255,000.
3. Lease aid and building companies are again under review by the legislature. Ms. Lueth attended a legislative conference lead by Senator Saltzman. Senator Saltzman indicated that the MN legislature is on a fact-finding mission about lease aid and charter school facilities. Ms. Lueth is watching this for financial impact.
4. A full review of financial systems within Yinghua and BKDA will begin in January. A meeting with BKDA will occur, with the outcome of more regular communication and reporting, including a regular cash flow report.
5. The school is continuing to pursue the Race to the Top state grant, the NMSI state grant, and other smaller grants for musical instruments and for the facility.
6. Current grants support instructional supplies, professional development, travel, some staffing and technology equipment this year.

E. Reporting

1. Assurance of Compliance Update and Report completed November 15, 2009.
2. STARS report completed November 9, 2009.
3. Finance Award submitted December 3, 2009.
4. MARSS reporting complete.

F. Staffing

1. Yinghua hired Carl Schlueter to serve as Director of Student, Families, and Community Relationships. The school plans to shorten his title to Director of Relationships. Carl is known to the students as Carl juren.
2. Two social events for staff are planned—an evening of bowling and a holiday hot pot party.
3. Teacher first evaluation cycle is complete. This cycle requires approximately four to six weeks.
4. The administrative and support staff evaluations will begin in January.
5. A part-time librarian has been hired and students have begun using the library.
6. Current open positions are:
 - P/T Food Server
 - P/T Science/Math Educational Asst.
 - Immersion teachers for 2010-2011

G. Students/Families

1. Many preparations for Chinese New Year have begun. The school hopes to make this a big celebration and mark it also as a “grand opening” with a theme: New home, big dreams, New Year.
2. Mr. Schlueter is working on a full review of safety and discipline guidelines.
3. Yinghua Academy has been invited by the Asia Society to participate in a focus group on Chinese licensure issues nationally. This is in collaboration with the College Board.
4. Commissioner of Education, Alice Seagren, visited Yinghua Academy on December 7. Her visit was the official granting of Q-Comp. The school is eligible to receive close to \$60,000 to support high-performing teachers.
5. The Parks Board is unwilling to allow Yinghua Academy access to a regular dedicated field.

V. UPDATES/OLD BUSINESS

A. Facilities and Minneapolis Parks and Recreation

- Joe Yang has spoken with Michelle Liberati of Charter Schools Development Corporation. She will give the school a reconciliation of transactions. This will drive discussions future facilities discussions. Ms. Moeller thanked Mr. Yang for again volunteering to spearhead the school’s facilities committee.
- Mr. Yang predicts that the school will not have in place an agreement with the Parks and Recreation board before the end of the year.

B. Financial

- Mr. Parish will bring to the board a revised budget for review at the January meeting. The budget will reflect the enrollment change from 313 to 303. November financials and fund transfers reports will be emailed to board members and will be reviewed at the January meeting.
- Cash flow is positive, but the school is spending its cash cushion. Mr. Parish predicts that the school will need to access its line of credit in April 2010. A meeting with BKDA had to be rescheduled due to snow. BKDA will create a monthly cash flow report which will be distributed to board members for review.

C. Fundraising

- The school raised more than \$20,000 through the Give to the Max Day sponsored by GiveMN.
- The fund raising committee will look into finding a funder to match online gifts again next year since the matching incentive and one-day online model seemed to work well this year.
- The fund raising committee is making preliminary plans for a fund raising event to occur before the end of the current fiscal year. One idea under consideration is to pair an already existing Yinghua event (such as the May carnival) with a silent auction and raffle. Funds raised would go towards completing the capital campaign.

- D. HR Committee. The committee's meeting had to be rescheduled.
- E. Marketing Committee—Janine Trutna distributed a list of current projects.
- Ads were placed in Hmong Time and Hmong Today and will be placed in Family Times.
 - Committee member Jen Shadowens is working on a new layout for the school's Facebook page.
 - The committee is searching for a free-lance web developer to create the structural bones of a new website for the school. Ms. Trutna recommends that a website committee be created. The committee is collecting three bids for the project. The committee feels that the website should be the top priority in terms of marketing for the school.
 - Ms. Trutna circulated a sign-up sheet for the January 9 Minneapolis and St. Paul School Fairs. There also is a Yinghua open house on this day.
 - Ms. Trutna recommends that the Marketing Committee appoint an events chair to serve on the Marketing Committee. This person's responsibilities would include finding and scheduling volunteers for events such as the Minneapolis and St. Paul school fairs.
 - The committee asked if more information is available about the Confucius grant.
 - Ms. Trutna showed a design for the sign in front of the school. Ms. Choy mentioned that the school's architectural consultant made a specific recommendation for the location of the sign as a part of the landscaping in front of the school.
- F. Policy Review Committee.
- Scott Jax reported that the committee will meet in January. Mr. Jax still is looking to add members to the committee. Mr. Jax has reviewed the school's regulatory policies and will next review school-specific policies.
 - Charter school law changes—not discussed.
 - Yinghua bylaws update—not discussed.
 - Student leave policy—Ms. Moeller asked Beth Topoluk to review the draft of the school's Student Leave Policy. Ms. Topoluk recommended that the policy be more specific. The policy should outline the process families must undertake when applying for a Leave, and it should provide an application form for the formal request for a Leave. Ms. Moeller asked Scott Jax to add this to his list of policies for review.
- G. Special Education Parent Advisory Council
- Taoyuan Li reported that the Council will meet in January. Kyle Kehrberg, special education director at ISES, will chair the January meeting of the group. By law every school must have one Council meeting per year. A letter of invitation will go to the families of all students who have an IEP. Ms. Li will check to see if students with a "504 plan" also should be included in the invitation list.

- H. Teacher Welcoming Committee
 - MaryAnn Choy reported that holiday plans are underway. Teachers and staff will be invited to informal holiday events and families also have asked if they may invite teachers and staff to family gatherings during break.
- I. Technology Committee
 - The board recommends that new Technology Committee be re-formed but that this group should be distinct and separate from a new committee to oversee changes to the school website.
- J. YACA—Naomi Mueller reported that the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 15, 2009.
- K. Board Training—no updates.
- L. Policy for use of the Yinghua facility by other groups. The board will review this policy at the next meeting. Several sheets were distributed to the board reflecting data, compiled by Keri Norell, listing appropriate ratios of children to staff during after school activities. Joe Yang will email board members with a proposed policy before the next meeting.
- M. Policy for use of gym by other groups including the Parks Board—as above.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Board Officers in 2010.
 - All of the current board officers will run for reelection: Cindy Moeller, chair; Doug Parish, treasurer; Abigail Pribbenow, secretary. Any member of the board also may stand for election to any of the officer positions. Board members who wish to stand for election to an officer position should notify Ms. Moeller via email before January 1, 2010. The election will take place at the January board meeting.
- B. Yinghua Board retreat, review of notes, and next steps.
 - All are invited to submit to Ms. Moeller a revised Yinghua Academy mission statement.
 - Mr. Yang will follow up with facilities subcommittee members.
 - Ms. Lueth will complete a middle school plan by January 1 and will present this to the board at the January meeting. Ms. Choy has been in contact with District 196 which currently is collecting data regarding neutral-based (no fee) co-curricular activities. This data may be helpful to Yinghua as it goes forward with middle school plans.
 - The “Flying the Plane” subcommittee will meet in January to discuss the differences between the entrepreneurial management approach which has successfully brought the school to this point and a more structural approach needed for future growth. Mr. Schlueter mentioned that some valuable mentoring programs are available online.

C. Yinghua Annual Report. Ms. Moeller distributed a draft of the director’s Annual Report.

- In the former board members section, she recommended that the wording in the “reason for resignation” column be changed from “personal reasons” to something more specific such as “completed term.” In section 4B, in the December – February row, “January 2009” should be changed to “January 2010.”

D. Missions of the Yinghua Board Committees

- Committees should draft a mission statement. Ms. Pribbenow will email to all an example mission statement. Committee chairs should send a draft of a mission statement to Ms. Moeller by January 8; statements will be reviewed at the January 11 board meeting.

E. Upcoming Dates—A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the dates below.

<u>Upcoming Meetings and Events</u>	
Monday, January 4	Start of Open Enrollment
Saturday, January 9, 3:00 - 4:30	Open House
Monday, January 11	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting
Saturday, January 23, 3:00 - 4:30	Open House
Monday, February 1	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting
Saturday, February 6, 3:00 - 4:30	Open House
Tuesday, February 9, 5:00 PM	Close of Open Enrollment
Thursday, February 11, 6:30 PM	Open Enrollment Lottery
Monday, February 22	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting
Monday, March 15 (proposed)	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting
Monday, April 12 (proposed)	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting
Monday, May 3 (proposed)	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting
Monday, May 24 (proposed)	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting
Monday, June 14 (proposed)	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting
Monday, July 12 (proposed)	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting
Monday, August 2 (proposed)	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting
Monday, August 23 (proposed)	Yinghua Academy Board Meeting

VII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m.