



May 6, 2013

2013 Yinghua Academy School Board Candidates

The following four individuals are standing for election to the Yinghua Academy School Board, for terms running June 2013 through June 2016. Voters will have the opportunity to meet and hear from the candidates at the Annual Meeting of the School on Monday, June 3, 2013 at 6 p.m. in the Yinghua Academy cafeteria.

There are four open seats on the School Board to be filled by this election. Official ballots will be sent to all eligible voters via the email on file in the office (or via U.S. mail if you have stated this communication preference) by May 28th. Ballots will be accepted into the office by email from a Yinghua recognized email address, U.S. mail or drop-off, or can be returned during the Annual Meeting of the School. All ballots received in the Yinghua Academy office by 6 p.m. on Wednesday, June 5 will be considered on time.

Currently, one licensed teacher, six parent representatives, and three community members comprise the continuing Yinghua Academy School Board. According to the bylaws of the School Board, in compliance with state statute, the Yinghua Academy Board follows the 1/1/1 governance model, where at least one member on the school board must be a licensed teacher working at the school, one member must be the parent/guardian of a currently enrolled student, and one member must be an outside community member who is neither employed by the school nor a parent/guardian of a child currently attending Yinghua Academy. In accord with bylaws, candidates on the ballot will be segregated by category of board membership and identified as community member, teacher, or parent/guardian.

The Nominating Committee of the School Board has identified needs for board members with experience in these areas: finance and non-profit boards.

Overview of Candidates and Affiliations

Community Members:

Suzanne Reider, Buyer, PeopleNet Communications Corporation

Parents/Guardians:

Denny Grubish (*incumbent, appointed March 2012*), Risk Consultant, Wells Fargo, current Yinghua Academy School Board Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair

Jen Shadowens (*incumbent, seated June 2010*), Marketing and Media Consultant, current Yinghua Academy School Board Chair

Sarah Whiting, Faculty, Art Institutes International MN and Self-Employed, Sarah Whiting Photographic



Candidate Statements

Community Members:

Suzanne Reider

I am community member who has spent about half my life in China/Taiwan and the other half here in the US. When we purchased our house and moved to the NE a few years ago, I was thrilled and proud to find out that my neighborhood has one of the best Chinese immersion schools in the US. Throughout these years in the NE, every parent I have talked to with a child at Yinghua has talked about how great it is and it would be my pleasure to serve with the group of people that makes this happen. I cannot wait to send my one year old to Yinghua in a few years!

I was born in Taiwan and moved to the US when I was about 2 years old. We moved back to Taiwan to attend Morrison Academy for middle and high school. I then attended Carleton College in Northfield, MN and graduated in 2002 with a BA in Economics. I started my career in the footwear industry working for And 1 and then Pony. In 2004, I decided I would move to China and work at the factory for a few years. In China, I managed business units that worked with Nike, New Balance, Reebok, and others. Since moving back to the US, I have been working with Peoplenet as a buyer. I have extensive experience and knowledge of negotiations, contracts, and managing multi-million dollar spends. As a buyer for Peoplenet, we have also become part of a publically traded company and worked closely with our finance team to ensure the purchasing process is SOX complaint.

I am also very involved in the community and have volunteered yearly at the Thanksgiving Meal held at the Grace Center (Next to Kinder Campus) and also the Easter Egg hunt held at Logan park. I am also very active in our church and serve in our children's ministry.

I hope that I can use my skills and passion to assist Yinghua in achieving their goals so all the students will have the best education possible.

Parents/Guardians:

Denny Grubish:

I have been a parent in the Yinghua Community since 2011. I have one daughter finishing first grade, and my younger daughter will start Kindergarten this fall. We have known about Yinghua since its first year of operations back in 2006. We have friends whose children are some of the first to attend the school; they have always spoken so highly of it. During early 2011 when my wife and I were considering schools for our children, Yinghua was our first choice.

My wife and I felt so fortunate when our daughter was accepted through the lottery. While there were many options to contribute to major fundraising campaigns I felt I should contribute further. When the Board Member opening became available last year, I immediately applied. I have been an active volunteer in my community over the past 25 years, and decided this was a great opportunity to continue. I wasn't deterred when the Board appointed another applicant. So when the opening presented itself again, I seized on the opportunity. I was appointed to the board March of last year and was elected Treasurer shortly thereafter.

During the past year, I have been serving on three different committees (Finance, Facilities, and Personnel) as well as serving as the committee chair for two of them. The Finance Committee has been developed over the past year to become more visible and transparent to the community. The work from the committee has brought much needed focus to the school's finances. The outcome should create a basis for building the right culture for implementing a robust development and implementation of the school's budget for years to come. I implemented a centralized file sharing and storage system for the Board that allows Board Members to share and store files while reducing the risk of record loss from a decentralized storage process.

If re-elected, I have many goals that I would like to achieve over the coming years. The school's financial management services company's contract is due to be renewed by June. I want to continue to build up the Finance Committee's membership to include parent representation from across all grades. I will develop an ongoing project plan for the finance committee and the Board that can be used as a template for years to come. I will also develop a set of financial training tools that can be used not only for new committee members but also as on-going training for current Board Members. I will also continue my work with the Facilities Committee to ensure that the school's expansion project will come in at its projected budget.

The work that I have done for Yinghua has been long and hard, but it also has been very rewarding. I have donated several hundred hours in just the past twelve months, and I am ready to donate several hundred more. I feel that I have the right skills to continue contributing to the Board and the Yinghua Community. I have been working for in the banking industry for the past 18+ years. During that time, I have worked in areas of fi

Jen Shadowens

Hello! Thank you for taking the time to read the board candidate statements. I am the current School Board Chair, and am running for re-election for a second three-year term. My board involvement began as a volunteer on the Marketing Committee (2009), and then I was first elected to the board in July 2010. Over the past three years I have served as the Chair of the Marketing Committee, as Board Secretary and as Board Chair (Fall 2011 to present).

I am the mother of two Yinghua students (Lily and Gus Burrows, in grades 3 and 1). Lily was part of the first cohort of students in the current building, when the school moved from Saint Paul to Minneapolis. As a resident of Northeast Minneapolis for over 12 years, we are so grateful for the opportunity to be part of the Yinghua community. I see myself as a parent-leader willing to carry the "baton" for a few years, to continue building upon the work that was begun many years ago by the parents and volunteers who opened the school.

Below are examples of key projects on which I had a significant leadership role these past three years:

- Re-launched the Yinghua Academy website (2010)
- Participated in the school's first strategic planning process (2011)
- Led the board in developing Annual Goals (2012, 2013) related to the long term strategic plan, to ensure that the plan does not just "sit on the shelf", but instead, that it stays relevant and actionable
- Led an institutional shift toward the transparency parents were asking the board to provide
- Initiated the 2011-12 Town Hall Meetings and written board updates
- Continued written board updates through 2012-13, along with more frequent website postings (policies, planning documents) to keep the community informed
- Led the search committee for a new Executive Director (2011)
- Steered the short term and long term facilities expansions (2011 to present)

Why I am running

Serving on the board has been hard work, but also very rewarding work, which is why I am running for re-election. There are projects I feel a duty to see through that don't end with my current term, such as the stewardship of our long term financial plan, the completion of the facilities expansion, and the development of a major gift cultivation program that could focus support on the high cost of immersion teacher recruitment and retention. I am proud of the work we have done – I have worked to build a board based on the best practices of charter school governance nationwide, which I have learned by attending many sessions at the National Charter School Conference and by reading and engaging with training materials from The Highbar. And yet there is still so much more to do. To be clear, I do not feel that I am personally essential to any of this work getting done! We work as a team, and we have a strong team. However, I understand the benefit of continuity at this juncture, and so I am willing to continue to serve for one more term.

Attributes I bring to the position

Professionally, I have fifteen years of experience in communications, primarily at advertising agencies but also at non profits. I currently take on freelance projects and consulting work while pursuing a Masters in Public Affairs at the Humphrey School at the University of Minnesota. Beyond these career-focused leadership experiences, and the fact that I am an experienced charter school leader at Yinghua, there are three other attributes that I want to mention which I feel are essential to my role as a strong board member:

- I believe in immersion education in general, and Chinese immersion in particular.
- I am honest and straight-forward. I have strong follow-through, especially when things get complicated.
- I approach the board as a professional experience and encourage decision-making based on what is best for the long term future of the school. I believe this is how we uphold our duty as board members – to take it seriously, to do our homework, to work collaboratively with the Executive Director, and to keep looking forward.

If re-elected, I want to continue to help lead Yinghua to a secure, sustainable future. Thank you for your consideration!

Sarah Whiting

I have heard about the nominations, and am interested in being considered for a board position. I have had a variety of experiences that I think would help me be an effective board member. I am a small business owner, have been on the NEMAA board, have been the coordinator of Art-A-Whirl, have written an accepted grant, and have been involved in every school my children have attended thus far.

Being a small business owner, I am in charge of all aspects of the business, from the web design to finding clients. Since I am an artist, I applied and was accepted for a Minnesota State Arts Board grant last year. I know the design of grant proposals and how important it is to format any proposal in the required way.

Within NEMAA (Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association), I have both been on the board and have been hired to run their principal event, Art-A-Whirl. While coordinating Art-A-whirl, I was in charge of all aspects of the event, including the catalog, fundraising, and designing the special parts of the event. I had volunteers and staff people who would report to me throughout planning, execution, and analysis. This event planning experience is something I would like to draw on at the school board.

I was also on the board at Little Voyageurs Montessori (a joint position shared with my husband) and I was on the PTA at North Park elementary. Working with schools, especially considering their limited funds, is important to me.