

**Regular Meeting of the Yinghua Academy School Board**  
1616 Buchanan Street NE, Minneapolis, MN, 7/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Room  
Wednesday, November 30, 2011, 6:00 PM  
FINAL

**Board Members in Attendance:** Doug Parish (Treasurer), Lou Bender, Ruth Hansen, Scott Jax, Rosemary Lawrence, Joel O'Malley

**Board Members Not in Attendance:** Jen Shadowens (Chair), Karen Lu (Secretary), Taoyuan Li

**Acting Director/Academic Director in Attendance:** Dr. Luyi Lien

**YACA Chair Not in Attendance:** Ana Ly

**Board Guests in Attendance:** Phyllis Saltzman, Organization Development Consultant

**Public in Attendance:** Becky Hoffman, Cindy Moeller, Susan Peterson, Janine Trutna

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Parish called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Hoffman stated that she toured potential kindergarten sites with the Facilities Committee and found the site A to be much more favorable than site B. (Specific sites were noted).

III. APPROVALS

a. 11/30 Agenda

**The MOTION by Mr. Jax to approve the agenda with the addition of adding the lease amendment as III. g. was seconded and passed.**

b. 11/3 Minutes

**The MOTION by Mr. O'Malley to approve the minutes with the correction was seconded and passed.**

c. 11/12 Minutes

**The MOTION by Mr. O'Malley to approve the minutes was seconded and passed.**

d. Acting Director Stipend

As Chair of the Personnel Committee, Mr. O'Malley, stated that he worked in conjunction with Board Chair, Ms. Shadowens, and Board Treasurer, Mr. Parish to recommend a stipend to recognize Dr. Lien's work as the Acting Executive Director. Based on their research on what had

been paid previously, they recommended \$6,000, to be paid over the three month period of that she has agreed to serve in this position.

**The MOTION by Dr. Lawrence to approve the recommended stipend was seconded and passed unanimously.**

e. Board Seat Appointment

Ms. Hansen reported that she has contacted everyone who expressed an interest in the open board position, however, some individuals needed time to assess their availability. Thus Ms. Hansen recommended deferring appointment of the board seat until the December meeting.

f. Request for Leave of Absence

Dr. Lien stated that a family with two students is requesting a leave beginning in January and returning in September 2012. In light of the Leave of Absence Policy not being approved, Dr. Lien recommended approval of their leave and she will work with them to develop an educational plan.

**The MOTION by Mr. Jax to approve the recommended leave was seconded and passed.**

g. Lease Amendment

As chair of the Facilities Committee, Mr. Jax explained that the school's real estate attorney, Craig Kepler drafted the lease amendment after consulting with MDE and the Charter School Development Corporation (CSDC). The reason for the amendment is that the school's earlier Lease Aid application to MDE was rejected because of the purchase option in the lease. The Amendment removes the section with the language related to leasing with an option to purchase. Mr. Parish said that he will submit the paperwork for lease aid again.

**The MOTION by Mr. O'Malley to approve the recommended lease amendment was seconded and passed.**

#### IV. REPORTS

a. Academic Report

Teacher Recruitment: Dr. Lien reported that there is a lot of competition for teachers due to there being several local Chinese immersion schools as well as a number opening in the Midwest. Dr. Lien stated that she is strengthening recruitment channels with the Taipai Cultural Center in Chicago and the Hanban, and that she believes that providing H1B Visa sponsorship is important for both current and potential new teachers. Each sponsorship is approximately \$3,000 and Dr. Lien is requesting funding for six sponsorships.

Discussion ensued acknowledging that even if Yinghua sponsors a teacher, s/he can leave the school. It was recommended that payment of H1B be one of several broader recruitment and retention strategies.

**The MOTION by Dr. Lawrence to approve \$24,000 for funding of H1B Visas was seconded and passed unanimously.**

Early Dismissal: Dr. Lien requested early dismissal on February 17 and April 27 to provide time for teacher training and development. One day would be used to visit other schools, and the other day would be used for development conducted on-site. The amount of time requested can be accommodated in the required student contact time. Dr. Lien stated that Yinghua Care would be provided. The question was raised about whether a late start might provide a better block of time to visit other schools and whether the bus company can provide transportation. Staff will look into both of these topics. Due to the need for further information, this topic will be re-visited at the December meeting.

b. YACA Report

It was announced that YACA will be sponsoring a meeting with Margaret Wong about traveling in China.

V. MAJOR TOPICS

a. Budget Re-cut

Mr. Parish reported good alignment of actuals to budget. Due to the holdback, the state owes the school approximately \$600,000. As a result, starting in March through June, Yinghua will need to use credit. The budget was originally based on an assumption of 476 students, this has been adjusted to 435 students. The budget will be re-cut in March.

The approved expenditures of \$30,000 for the \$6,000 stipend and for the \$24,000 H1B Visas sponsorships will reduce the FY 2012 Working Budget Net Income from \$60,879 to \$30, 879.

**The MOTION by Dr. Lawrence to approve the proposed amended budget previously approved for the additional \$30,000 of expenditures was seconded and passed unanimously.**

VI. STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

a. Organizational Sustainability

i. Executive Director Search Update

Overall, there were 88 candidates. The Search Committee is interviewing seven individuals the week of November 27 with the intention of narrowing the group to two-three finalist who will participate in a second round of interviews and forums with staff and parents.

ii. Expansion Plan

The Expansion Plan has been submitted and Ms. Shadowens met with Ms. Topuluk, Executive Director of Friends of Education to discuss the plan. Ms. Topuluk indicated that further management capacity must be evident prior to submittal to MDE; this will be based on

the skill set of the new executive director and whether there is a need to augment that individual's skills with consultant support.

The Facilities Committee visited two sites within an approximate one mile radius of Yinghua Academy as possibilities for the kindergarten expansion: site A and site B. Both sites have educational wings; the Committee found the former site to be more suitable for Yinghua's needs.

iii. Policy Review Process

Mr. O'Malley presented a phased process for Board review of all mandated and recommended policies by the end of the 2011-2012 school year. The process and Phase I policies can be found in the Board handout for the meeting. The Phase I group of policies was presented by Mr. O'Malley and Ms. Saltzman and discussion ensued; this group of policies will be further discussed and voted on at future board meetings.

iv. Enrollment Capacity

Mr. O'Malley presented the redlined proposed amendments to the current Enrollment Policy and highlighted the relevant legal requirements. This policy will be reviewed and voted on at the next Board meeting along with the other Phase I policies.

b. Professional Development

The topics in this section were discussed during the Acting Executive Director's Report.

c. Academic

Dr. Lawrence stated that she and Dr. Lien met for initial discussions for the Academic Committee. They will be identifying committee members and calling a meeting soon. The overall goals of the committee are: (1) Be nationally recognized for academic excellence, (2) Be in the top 5-10% of MN Schools based on MCA Data, (3) Be a top performing immersion school, and (4) Meet Friends of Education academic goals.

d. School Culture and Community

Ms. Bender stated that the School Culture and Community Committee has been formed and a three year plan has been outlined. There are still open seats on the committee. The goal of the committee is to: Build a positive, collaborative and respectful school culture around Yinghua Academy's mission and values.

VII. ADJOURN

**The MOTION made by Mr. Jax to adjourn at 8:06 PM was seconded and passed.**

Minutes drafted by Phyllis Saltzman, Organization Development Consultant, and Karen Lu, Secretary.

Approved by vote of Board on: December 19, 2011