

Regular Meeting of the Yinghua Academy School Board
1616 Buchanan Street NE, Minneapolis, MN, 7/8th Grade Room
Monday, December 19, 2011, 6:00 PM
FINAL

Board Members in Attendance: Lou Bender, Ruth Hansen, Rosemary Lawrence, Taoyuan Li, Karen Lu (Secretary), Joel O'Malley, Doug Parish (Treasurer), Jen Shadowens (Chair)

Board Members Not in Attendance: Scott Jax

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

YACA Chair in Attendance: Ana Ly

Board Guests in Attendance: Phyllis Saltzman, Organization Development Consultant; Nicole Schmidt, BKDA (Accounting Firm)

Public in Attendance: Becky Hoffman, Susan Peterson, Steve Ogunro

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Shadowens called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

III. APPROVALS

a. 12/19 Agenda

Mr. Parish added III. Approvals h. 990 Tax Return and Ms. Shadowens added IV. Reports f. Board Seat Appointment.

The MOTION by Ms. Bender to approve the agenda with the above additions was seconded and passed.

b. 11/30 Minutes

Mr. O'Malley made minor edits and noted that Phase I group policies would not all be voted on at the same meeting. Mr. Parish noted that motions involving financial decisions need to indicate that they were passed unanimously. Ms. Bender would like the minutes to reflect open seats on the School Culture and Community Committee.

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve the minutes with the above corrections and additions was seconded and passed.

c. Executive Director Recommendation

As Chair of the Executive Director Search Committee, Ms. Shadowens described the extensive process which included nearly 100 applicants, 15 short-listed candidates, and 3 finalists who each interviewed twice with the Search Committee, spoke and took questions at a staff forum, and spoke and took questions at the December Town Hall parent forum. Ms. Shadowens thanked the following people for their part in the search process: Abigail Pribbenow, former board chair; Anne Rizzo, recruiting consultant; the Executive Director Search Committee: Ms. Hansen, Mr. Jax, Dr. Lawrence, and Dr. Li; administration and staff, including Dr. Lien, Audrey Buss, Ms. Saltzman, Deb Peterson, Jennifer Olsen, Dave Waldoch, and Chemin Chu; YACA members, including Becky Hoffman, Coley Murphy, and Gretchen Bierbaum; and board members, Mr. Parish, Ms. Lu, and Ms. Bender.

Ms. Shadowens requested that the board approve the Committee's recommendation to hire its first choice candidate, Susan M. Berg, as CEO/Executive Director of Yinghua Academy beginning January 3rd, 2012, at the salary of \$105,000 for twelve months with standard paid time off and benefits. Ms. Shadowens noted that Ms. Berg has extensive educational leadership experience that the Search Committee determined to be more than equivalent to the required Masters Degree.

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to accept the Executive Search Committee's recommendation was seconded and passed unanimously.

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to thank the Executive Search Committee for their work was seconded and passed.

d. Amended Board Meeting Schedule

Ms. Shadowens proposed changing to a once-a-month meeting schedule to allow flexibility for monthly town hall events, standing committee meetings, and to align board meetings with financial reports. The proposed schedule has board meetings the first Monday of the month and town hall meetings the Thursday of the following week, with a few exceptions (see Board Packet for details). The town hall meeting schedule still needs to be finalized.

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to restructure board meetings to be held on a monthly basis was seconded and approved.

e. Policy Review

Mr. O'Malley called for questions from the board.

1. #406 Public and Private Personnel Data; Employee Authorization Form

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve Yinghua Policy #406 was seconded and passed.

2. #504 Student Dress and Appearance

Mr. Parish made a minor edit.

The MOTION by Ms. Bender to approve Yinghua Policy #504 as amended was seconded and passed.

3. #515 Protection and Privacy of Pupil Records

Mr. O'Malley made minor edits.

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve Yinghua Policy #515 as amended was seconded and passed.

4. #609 Religion

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve Yinghua Policy #609 was seconded and passed.

5. #801 Equal Access to Facilities of School

Duplicate "school name" to be deleted.

The MOTION by Ms. Bender to approve Yinghua Policy #801 as amended was seconded and passed.

6. Enrollment Policy

Ms. Lu made a minor edit.

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve Yinghua Enrollment Policy as amended was seconded and passed.

f. Enrollment Capacity Adjustment

Given the tight facilities space this year and having reached the mid-point of the academic year, Mr. O'Malley proposed adjusting the default capacity for each grade, of 25 students per classroom, to the number of students currently enrolled in each grade for the 2011-2012 academic year (see Board Packet for details).

The MOTION by Ms. Lu to approve the recommended enrollment capacity was seconded and passed.

g. Early Release/Late Start Days for Spring 2012

Dr. Lien asked the board to approve an early release for Friday, February 10th, and a late start for Friday, April 27th (see Board Packet for details). Dr. Lawrence suggested collecting feedback from staff and parents regarding their preference for early release or late start. Mr. O'Malley expressed concern regarding Yinghua Extended Care capacity and coordination. Ms. Saltzman was optimistic about a current candidate for Aftercare/Extended Care Coordinator.

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve the proposed early release/late start days as presented was seconded and passed.

h. 990 Tax Return

Mr. Parish explained the purpose of the informational return and advised that the board member roster and hours worked would be updated.

The MOTION by Ms. Bender to approve the 990 Tax Return as amended was seconded and passed.

IV. REPORTS

a. Acting Executive Director/Academic Director Report

Dr. Lien presented the Acting Executive Director/Academic Director Report. The new contract with Friends places greater emphasis on Data-Driven Instruction. Discussion followed. Mr. O'Malley expressed concern regarding the tight Open House schedule. Dr. Lien would like to extend the next Open House to an hour and a half to allow more time for questions and answers. Refer to Board Packet for remaining items summarized.

b. YACA Report

Ms. Ly expressed thanks for the Executive Director parent forum. Refer to Board Packet for remaining items summarized.

c. Academic Committee

Dr. Lien reported that recent forums held for 5th grade and 6th grade parents had high attendance and good discussions. Dr. Lien contacted the top three high school choices by Yinghua middle school parents. All three high schools expressed interest in furthering the Chinese language skills of Yinghua students. St. Paul Public Schools recently contacted Dr. Lien regarding an interest in combining middle schools after 6th grade. Dr. Lien will respond to begin the discussion. Ms. Shadowens reported that Dr. Myriam Met, a renowned expert on foreign language immersion programs, was impressed with Yinghua academics during her recent visit.

d. Professional Development Committee

Ms. Hansen reported that a Professional Development survey was forwarded to all teachers.

e. School Culture and Community Committee

Ms. Bender reported that several task forces have been formed and that there are currently two priorities for the committee: identifying Yinghua values, and educating parents and teachers about Chinese and American culture.

f. Board Seat Appointment

Ms. Hansen introduced Mr. Ogunro as a candidate for the open board seat. Mr. Ogunro described his financial background in investment banking, business, fundraising, and mergers and acquisitions. Mr. Ogunro also expressed interest in Yinghua's strong academics for his two-year old and four-year old children.

V. ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Ms. Shadowens consulted Mike Felmlee, Strategic Planning Consultant, regarding Yinghua's committee structure. Mr. Felmlee did not feel that it was necessary to have a separate Organizational Sustainability Committee. Currently, Yinghua has seven committees, six that are active and should hold regular meetings: Academic, Professional Development, School Culture & Community, Facilities, Finance, and Personnel; and one, the Governance Committee, that meets periodically.

a. Conclusion of Saltzman Contract

Ms. Saltzman presented an Operations Needs Assessment summarizing actions taken and recommended. Mr. O'Malley noted that the report would be a useful tool for the new Executive Director.

b. On-boarding New Executive Director

Ms. Shadowens invited suggestions regarding onboarding Ms. Berg. Priorities were identified as expansion/facilities, learning day-to-day financial management, the January 10th Special Education audit, open enrollment processes and events, meeting with each committee chair, and meeting with Ms. Ly of YACA to discuss disbursement of Foundation funds. Other persons suggested for early meetings are Phyllis Saltzman, Beth Topoluk at Friends of Education, Mike Felmlee of the Prouty Project, Joan Brzezinski of the Confucius Institute, and Tara Fortune of CARLA at UMN.

Ms. Shadowens recommended that Yinghua apply for membership to Charter School Partners (CSP), an organization that promotes the development of charter school leadership. Ms. Shadowens noted that this will be an important component of the Expansion Plan supplement addressing Yinghua's management capacity. Ms. Shadowens distributed a copy of CSP's quality contract along with a chart CSP had compiled illustrating that Yinghua has the highest 2010-2011 MCA proficiency rates in both reading and math out of all Minneapolis public charter schools. In addition to providing support to Ms. Berg regarding charter school management, CSP is also a resource for charter school boards and conducts board development work for its partner schools.

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve CSP membership for the remainder of the 2011-12 academic year with a \$1,000 fee was seconded and passed unanimously.

In consultation with Mr. Felmlee, Ms. Shadowens noted that the Executive Director would be an ex-officio member of each board committee and would set the committee agendas in conjunction with the respective chairs. Mr. Felmlee helped clarify the main roles of each chair as to recruit members, convene meetings, jointly set agendas, chair meetings, and report back to full board/ be accountable for implementation of the action plan.

Dr. Li mentioned that the Special Education on-site assessment will be held on January 10th. Discussion followed. Dr. Li to determine Special Education classroom needs and discuss existing classroom availability with Dr. Lien. Ms. Shadowens will look into use of Parks Building space.

c. Open Enrollment Period

Yinghua's open enrollment period begins Tuesday, January 3rd. Ms. Shadowens reviewed a draft of the Intent to Return form. The lottery will be held Tuesday, February 7th. Ms. Shadowens suggested that several board members participate.

Mr. O'Malley stated that the board will need to set capacity for the 2012-2013 school year at the January board meeting. The results of the Intent to Return form will be used for this purpose.

d. Facilities Update

Ms. Lu reported that the Facilities Committee has authorized Mr. Vang to begin negotiations with the owner of the preferred Kindergarten site, and to begin work on rezoning the current property.

e. Policy Review

Mr. O'Malley read Yinghua policies #502, #532, #806, #004, and #005 for the second time, and the following Yinghua policies for the first time: #214, #413, #414, #415, #506, #514, #522, #524, #714, and #007.

VI. ADJOURN

The MOTION made by Mr. Parish to adjourn at 8:43 PM was seconded and passed.

Minutes drafted by Karen Lu, Secretary.

Approved by vote of Board on: January 9, 2012