

Regular Meeting of the Yinghua Academy School Board
1616 Buchanan St. NE, Minneapolis, School Library
Thursday, June 23, 2011, 6:00 pm
Final

Board Members in Attendance

Maryann Choy (Secretary), Scott Jax, Dr. Taoyuan Li, Cindy Moeller, Keri Norell, Doug Parish (Treasurer), Abigail Pribbenow (Chair), Kristin Swenson

Board Members Not in Attendance

Jen Shadowens, Dr. Ben Weng

Academic Director and Interim Executive Director in Attendance

Dr. Luyi Lien, Ursina Swanson

Public in Attendance

Lou Bender, Ruth Hansen, Rosemary Lawrence, Karen Lu, Karl Jentoft, Heidi Farnham and approximately eight others attended the meeting.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Pribbenow called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

___ **The MOTION by Ms. Swenson to approve the proposed agenda with changes was seconded and passed.**

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Farnham offered comments.

IV. BOARD APPROVALS

A. Minutes from Regular Meeting of the School Board, June 6, 2011

The MOTION by Ms. Swenson to approve the June 6, 2011, minutes with a change was seconded and passed.

B. Request for leave of absence for two students

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve the leave of absence for two students was seconded and passed.

C. Retaining a realtor for facilities expansion search

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to authorize Mr. Jax to carry out due diligence in engaging JB Realty services by specifying a reasonable expiration date, negotiating lower rates than what was proposed and fees not to exceed \$5,000 was seconded and passed unanimously.

D. Strategic Plan

The MOTION by Mr. Jax to approve the one-page Strategic Plan for 2012-2014 with changes was seconded and passed.

Ms. Pribbenow will work with Ms. Swanson to recommend a Board champion for each 'bucket' or major theme and leads (Yinghua staff and other appropriate individuals) for each strategy. Many of the action plans will be carried out by the staff though there are several cases where board members and others will drive processes. The proposed mission statement revisions were deferred to a values and beliefs strategy group yet to be formed under the auspices of the "Organizational Sustainability" strategic planning "bucket."

E. *Ex officio* position on Yinghua Academy School Board for YACA Board Chair

The Board deferred the debate regarding the possible creation of an *ex officio* non-voting School Board position for the Chair of the YACA Board to a roles and responsibilities strategy group yet to be formed also under the auspices of the "Organizational Sustainability" strategic planning "bucket."

V. DISCUSSION

A. Preparations for and impact of potential State shutdown

Mr. Parish presented four scenarios outlining the impact to Yinghua's cash flow if the State government were to shut down. Yinghua would need to draw on its credit line in all scenarios and these draws would then be paid off by October 31 when State holdbacks are due.

B. Executive Director search, RFP for a search firm

Ms. Pribbenow had an informational meeting with a Yinghua parent who works at Keystone Search. She received three referrals to reputable search firms which handle searches of the scope of Yinghua's. The search firm fee is typically one third of the first year of salary for the position being filled.

The MOTION by Mr. Jax to evaluate search firms for the Executive Director was seconded and passed unanimously.

C. Charter renewal with Friends of Education

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to authorize Ms. Pribbenow to work with Friends of Education to make goals more acceptable, as discussed, and then to sign the contract was seconded and passed.

The Board reviewed the Friends of Education contract which is due for renewal on June 30, 2011. Ms. Pribbenow suggested that the board implement a practice of tracking and monitoring of the goals on an annual basis (at least). All agreed that the School Board needs to develop and closely follow a calendar of authorizer reporting and meeting deadlines.

D. Permission to exist in two sites in 2012-13

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to move forward with an expansion application with Friends of Education and with the State and for Ms. Moeller to coordinate the completion of this application by July 20, 2011, was seconded and passed unanimously.

VI. SCHOOL BOARD REPORTS

A. Chair, Ms. Pribbenow reported.

1. Ms. Topoluk congratulated Yinghua on attaining MDE's recognition of being a high growth charter school. Four other Friends charter schools also received this recognition. This status qualifies Yinghua for a State-wide charter expansion grant. Ms. Topoluk encouraged Yinghua to apply for this grant as soon as it is made available which may be as soon as this summer.
2. Ms. Pribbenow thanked the fifth grade parents for their comments in the letter read aloud at the June 6, 2011, meeting of the School Board. The information they outlined in the letter and in a subsequent informal online survey of middle school needs is helpful to the Administration.
3. Ms. Pribbenow and Mrs. Swanson met with two Minneapolis Public School representatives to share Yinghua's facilities expansion needs. A letter will be sent to ask that Yinghua be considered when MPS properties become available for lease.
4. Ms. Pribbenow is working to recruit a new Board secretary.
5. Future School Board meeting dates, August through December 2011, have been scheduled.
6. Binders for new Board members are being prepared.
7. Ms. Moeller was recognized for perfect attendance at Board meetings.

B. Treasurer

Mr. Parish shared May financials with the Board and highlighted that the State is holding back about \$744,000 in Yinghua funding. Yinghua's year end fund balance is projected to be \$727,000, or 13%.

C. Secretary: Ms. Choy asked Board members to report their volunteer hours.

D. Committees

1. Personnel. Ms. Swenson reported that the Administration met with the Medical and Dental insurers and confirmed that the staff is getting the highest benefits.

2. Facilities. Mr. Jax deferred his report to Mr. Karl Jentoft, Vice President of Charter School Development Corporation. Mr. Jentoft explained the advantages to Yinghua of occupying the current Buchanan facility and the costs and value of the property.

I. ADJOURN

The MOTION by Ms. Moeller to adjourn at 9:16 PM was seconded and passed.

Minutes drafted by MaryAnn Choy, Board Secretary

Approved by vote of Board on: July 18, 2011