

Regular Meeting of the Yinghua Academy School Board
1616 Buchanan St. NE, Minneapolis, Cafeteria
Monday, Sept 26, 2011, 6:00 pm
FINAL

Board Members in Attendance

Lou Bender, Ruth Hansen, Rosemary Lawrence, Taoyuan Li, Karen Lu, Doug Parish (Treasurer), Abigail Pribbenow (Chair), Jen Shadowens (Secretary), Ursina Swanson (Interim Executive Director, Ex-Officio)

Board Members Not in Attendance

Scott Jax

Academic Director in Attendance

Dr. Luyi Lien

YACA Chair in Attendance

Ms. Ana Ly

Public in Attendance

Karen Calcaterra, MaryAnn Choy, Cindy Moeller, Joel O'Malley, Kurt Schaper, Janine Trutna, Denise (Friends of Education representative)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Pribbenow called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

II. AGENDA APPROVAL

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

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

IV. YACA REPORT

See typed report for full details

- A. Serena Jones-White is now YACA Secretary. New board member: Tammy Cheng appointed to fill vacated position.
- B. Kite festival event planned
- C. Seeking new Chinese New Year chairperson
- D. Confucius Day to be celebrated at school on Thursday 9/29.
- E. YACA Membership Directory produced – **Provided draft of a proposed Yinghua policy on Data Practices Compliance. Board will review at next meeting.**

- F. Concluded two fundraisers at Curriculum Night. Requested Read-a-thon pledges from Board Members.
- G. Donated an additional \$450 to staff lounge for countertops. Total amount YACA has contributed to lounge is \$1,287.

V. BOARD COMPOSITION (*updates from Chair*)

A. Kristin Swenson resigned from the Board on 9/6/11. Chair would like to acknowledge the work she did on the board, namely serving as Chair of Personnel committee and website development with Treefort. Her seat is considered a vacated seat (vs. vacant seat).

B. Chair nominates Joel O'Malley for board consideration to be appointed into this vacated seat. Mr. O'Malley is an employment lawyer and a Yinghua Kindergarten parent and the board has a specific need for a member with legal experience.

The MOTION by Ms. Lawrence to appoint Joel O'Malley to the Board for the remainder of Kristin Swenson's term (through June 2013) was seconded and passed.

C. Legal interpretations this past month have revealed a potential issue with another board member, Mr. Scott Jax, who came onto the Board by being appointed into a vacant seat. Awaiting legal opinion on how to handle.

D. Ongoing legal interpretation (see prior minutes) on the status of Ms. Lou Bender as a legal board member has been resolved. Law is unclear about staff members serving on a charter school board. Legal recommendation is to take the conservative approach and not have staff members serve on the board. Ms. Bender has opted to suspend her substitute teaching and enrichment piano teaching to be eligible to stay on the Board.

VI. BOARD APPROVALS

A. **The MOTION by Karen Lu to appoint Mary Ann Choy as Chair of the Technology Committee was seconded and passed.**

B. Minutes from Regular Meeting of the School Board, August 29, 2011

The MOTION by Ms. Bender to approve the August 29, 2011 minutes with changes was seconded and passed.

C. Annual Report – Draft was presented by Karen Calcaterra for discussion. Board recognizes Ms. Calcaterra's thorough work in collecting the input and writing the report.

The MOTION by Ms. Shadowens to approve the Annual Report with changes for submission to Friends of Education by 10/1 and the State of Minnesota by 10/15 was seconded and passed.

- D. Enrollment materials – Lateral Entry and Provision for Children of Immersion Teachers language is being reviewed by attorneys for legal opinion. Open enrollment dates were presented for consideration. Ms. Pribbenow will ensure the Application Form is posted by 10/1/11 as required. Capacity in each grade must be posted by 2/1/12.

The MOTION by Mr. Parish to approve the open enrollment period of January 3 – February 6, 2013 and lottery date of February 8 at 6:30 PM was seconded and passed.

VII. REPORT FROM INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

See typed report for full details.

- A. Good start to the year. Responsive Classroom has resulted in a reduction in behavior incidents. Quantitative support for this is underway.
- B. New teacher training is ongoing and is Dr. Lien's #1 priority.
- C. Middle school team is exemplary. All teachers have masters degrees and are specialists in their field. Purchased CPO Science curriculum, same used by top Minnesota school districts which provides hands-on science daily to middle school students.
- D. Distributed charts of MCA test data, emphasized need to always improve.
- E. Camp Widjiwagan for 5th grade students confirmed for Oct. 17-19, 2011
- F. Master school schedule is very complex. Working through orchestra scheduling issues with affected parents.
- G. Bus service issue with Bus #1 serving South Minneapolis. Meeting with families this Thursday to discuss options to shorten ride.
- H. Students are adjusting to new lunchroom routines. Any student who needs more time to eat is always able and encouraged to stay longer and finish, monitored by staff and volunteers.
- I. School needs an attendance policy that can be implemented consistently. Students are pulled out of class by parents too often for non essentials.
- J. Recommends one entry point for the school. Seeing cases again this year of struggling students & teachers due to students without Chinese experience in grades beyond Kindergarten.
- K. Front Office has been restructured on a temporary basis. Mrs. Swanson appointed Kristin Swenson to the receptionist role so that Marsha Andrews can focus on reporting requirements.
- L. Grade 7/8 trip to China planning sessions are beginning with parents.

As this is Mrs. Swanson's last Board Meeting, Ms. Pribbenow presented Mrs. Swanson a gift to thank her for her commitment to Yinghua Academy and for her hard work and accomplishments over the past 9 months, including turning around the Middle School

program and setting a strong course its success, implementing a robust professional development program, overseeing hiring for this school year, as well as numerous other academic and operations improvements. Mrs. Swansons's last day is 10/14/11.

VIII. REPORT FROM ACADEMIC DIRECTOR

See typed report for full details.

- A. Curriculum Night: 292 parents attended. 99% of those who attended found the sessions very helpful and informative.
- B. Each grade has had their simple version curriculum map revised and completed for this school year. The maps will be posted online.
- C. Field trip planning has been completed for the year.
- D. Chinese sister school visit has been postponed.
- E. HanBan Professors will visit on September 30.
- F. Director of Cultural Division of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Chicago visited on September 22.
- G. Startalk Report completed and submitted on September 16. Fall Awards meeting on 10/20-21 in Washington DC.
- H. Gratefully received a donation from 2011 MN Taida Reunion Organization.
- I. Assessment Coordinator training was held on September 22.
- J. Asked Dr. Li to give an overview to the Board of the MDE Division of Compliance and Assistance monitoring review of Special Education, which is upcoming in January 2012, and the training the SE team at Yinghua has received to prepare for the review. Attachments.
- K. China trip planning has begun, distributed a schedule of upcoming planning meetings with parents and staff.

VII. SCHOOL BOARD REPORTS

- A. Chair
 - 1. Mrs. Swanson sent a letter to the Board dated 9/9, revising her last day of employment at Yinghua to 10/14/11.
 - 2. Another inappropriate, offensive email sent by unidentified party to info@yinghuaacademy.org, blind copying some of our staff. Disruptive to the beginning of school, containing numerous unfounded statements about Yinghua administration. This behavior will not be tolerated in our community. Police and legal have been contacted. Mrs. Swanson was disappointed that the Board did not take a stronger stance in responding to the email. Board discussion about using this as an opportunity to pull our community together to discuss hazards of email communication, and school's values.
 - 3. Follow up to motion from last board meeting on small group (Parish, Pribbenow, Bender, Shadowens). Discussion of short-term contract with organizational consultant to start 10/3 to work on non-academic needs assessment, compliance, expansion application, etc. toward the Strategic Plan goal of organizational sustainability. Consultant has experience in change management with non profits, serves on a charter school board,

and has Chinese cultural connections, so she is familiar with many of the challenges we face as a community.

4. Need to preserve the Academic Director's hours as fully dedicated to teaching staff. Propose hiring retired principal as short-term contractor to help with teacher evaluations, as has been done in the past. Propose returning Academic Coordinator's duties to 100% curriculum support, which will be an immediate goal of the organizational consultant.
5. Anne Rizzo, search consultant for permanent executive director, has interviewed many staff members to compile a position profile. Search committee will meet with consultant next week to discuss sourcing areas and finalize profile in preparation for interviewing. Ms. Rizzo identified the one page strategic plan as very helpful in communicating the work to prospective candidates.

B. Treasurer

1. Need to re-cut budget with current enrollment (down to 447 from 476 projection).
2. Legal issue with lease (see prior minutes) is at Attorney General's office for review.

C. Secretary

1. Distributed annual board packets containing reference documents for each member (calendar, bylaws, FLAP grant, non profit board member responsibilities, etc.)
2. Outlined new procedure that copies of board documents will not be brought to the meeting unless a member requests in advance. Only one copy to route through public attendees will be provided to conserve paper.

D. Strategic Plan champions

1. Academic – no report
2. Professional Development - Ursina Swanson and Ruth Hansen submitted an action plan draft for discussion.
3. School Culture & Community – no report
4. Organizational Sustainability – no report

E. Committees

1. Personnel – Interviews with para-professional openings this week. Need new committee chairperson.
2. Facilities – Committee will begin visiting potential temporary sites this Friday. Broker has also spoken with architects about the possibility of expanding on current site by re-zoning the property. Committee requests board to approve sending a letter to CSDC, formally requesting assistance from CSDC to evaluate site's potential and engage the architect.

MOTION by Ms. Bender to send letter drafted from Yinghua Academy Facilities Chair to Charter Schools Development Corporation requesting assistance to complete the necessary due diligence on an alternate complete evaluation of the current site as a potential permanent location was seconded and passed.

3. Marketing – No report.
4. Fundraising – No report.
5. Nominating – No report

The MOTION made by Mr. Parish to adjourn at 8:40 PM was seconded and passed.

Minutes drafted by Jen Shadowens, Board Secretary and
Edited by Karen Lu, Acting Secretary
Approved by vote of Board on: October 17, 2011