

# YINGHUA ACADEMY

Safety, Speak Chinese, Learn, Happiness, Global Citizenship



WORLD'S BEST WORKFORCE REPORT

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# Introduction

Yinghua Academy is a national leader in Mandarin Chinese immersion education. When founded in 2006, it became the first Chinese immersion charter public school in the U.S. and the first Chinese immersion school in the Midwest. Yinghua Academy is a bilingual, tuition-free, public K-8 charter school with an international perspective. Yinghua's charter authorizer is Friends of Education.

***The mission of Yinghua Academy is to prepare its students to be engaged and productive global citizens by providing a research-based educational program that includes a rigorous academic program, immersion in Chinese language and culture, and a nurturing and supportive school environment.***

Yinghua is a full immersion school, meaning the content delivered in Chinese is not translated into English later in the day or week. Students in kindergarten through fourth grade receive all of their instruction in Chinese, with the exception of some specialist classes (art, physical education, music, and English). Yinghua's unique program, combined with the consistent academic success of its students, has enabled it to enjoy robust growth.

Yinghua offers a rigorous academic education that follows Minnesota Academic Standards and uses the Core Knowledge Sequence as the content foundation for all subject areas. Yinghua has placed high priority on preserving the integrity of its language immersion focus by not introducing English Language Arts until second grade, when the target language (Mandarin) is solidly established in its students. However, in preparation for Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) testing in third grade, MCA-based content is incorporated *in Chinese* into the K-1 instruction. As a result, the school is able to consistently produce high academic results as measured by the State of Minnesota for all schools, while also producing high academic results based on measures of Chinese language acquisition. For example, in the first four data releases of the Minnesota Department of Education Multiple Measure Rating system (May and August 2012, September 2013, October 2014), Yinghua ranked within the top 15% of all public schools in Minnesota. In all four waves of data, Yinghua was the #1 or #2 ranked language immersion program in Minnesota based on overall student achievement.

## 2014-15 Year in Review

In this *Year of the Sheep* which began with the annual Chinese New Year celebration on February 28, 2015, the Yinghua Academy community continues to capitalize on what is traditionally anticipated to be a year of peace and calm. What a welcome relief after a year of construction! Our remarkable new addition with total square footage twice the size of the original building has provided state-of-the-art facilities inclusive of a Middle School wing, English classrooms, music classrooms, an art studio, a science lab, a media center, special education classrooms, and a full-size gymnasium. Along with the renewed sense of calm that it provides, this “home” has also supported tremendous growth over the past year in enrollment, financial performance, academic performance, innovation, and reputation.

### Enrollment

We began the 2014-15 school year above enrollment projections with 666 students, an auspicious number in Chinese culture which can mean “everything going smoothly”. The school continues to attract the interest of new families, with over 180 applications submitted during open enrollment period in February. Finally, Yinghua had exceptional student retention this fall, with 96% of students returning for the fall of 2015-16. We also had a 93% teacher retention rate – both are the strongest in the history of the school.

### Financial Performance

Yinghua once again received an unqualified audit in fall 2014. Additionally, after many years of diligent collaboration between the School Board, Executive Director, staff, and management partner, we achieved and even exceeded the long-sought after 20% fund balance, adding \$643,135 in surplus to the reserve fund, so that it now totals 22% of expenses.

### Academic Performance

Once again, we are proud of our spectacular student performances in classroom activities and evaluations, at Chinese New Year performances, and on standardized tests. Overall, the school has demonstrated impressive student outcomes and success in closing achievement gaps. Despite our continued high proficiency rates in reading and math, our students still show significant growth. Specifically, 38.1 % of students in reading and 30.7% of students in math attained high growth status. On the newly published school report card for 2014-2015, Yinghua Academy was designated as a REWARD school, meaning it is in the top 15 percent of Title I schools based on the Multiple Measurement Rating (MMR).

### Innovation

Students of all ages, along with their families, were invited to participate in the design and execution of a large scale mural throughout the school’s new entryway and into the cafeteria/commons, thanks to a grant from the Metropolitan Arts Council. Over 300 students, teachers, parents, and family members joined in this artistic adventure to depict landmarks and activities representative of east and west, which

was featured in the local newspaper. This year marked the fourth annual middle school study abroad exchange with our sister school in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, in China. Fifteen students completed the capstone trip this year. Lastly, the school's collaboration with Minnesota Online High School (MNOHS) and other Twin Cities traditional high schools continues to grow.

## Reputation

Public confirmation of our success was exceptionally strong this year, fueled by journalist Jane Peterson when she captured the essence of Yinghua in an October 2014 Sunday New York Times and the International New York Times article entitled "*An American School Immerses Itself in All Things Chinese*". As this story spread, we received accolades from across the globe. Later in the year, Yinghua received two prestigious awards. First, Yinghua was one of five (out of 851) Confucius classrooms world-wide to receive a Confucius Classroom of the Year award through the Confucius Institute. Second, the Minnesota Department of Education nominated Yinghua, one of only eight schools (out of 2,251) for the National Blue Ribbon Award through the United States Department of Education.

Two of the many criteria used to select the Confucius Classroom of the Year are "unique curriculum design joining Chinese and western cultures" and "cultural programs in the community and their impact". One piece of evidence is our annual Chinese New Year performances. In 2015, increased demand prompted the school to offer two, rather than one, performances, and 2,713 tickets were sold to this showcase of Lunar New Year songs, dances, and plays. A native of Beijing in this year's audience said, "The kids- white, black, and brown- could speak Chinese so well. It was surreal to hear them talking in Chinese without noticeable accent. It was actually the best performance that we have ever seen in the US."

In 2014-2015, Yinghua Academy again hosted many visitors, both local and from around the world because of the school's position as the first Chinese immersion charter school and because of continued success over its first nine years of existence. Visitors included: Ms. Hsiu-wen Lin, Director of Education at Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion School (PVCICS) in Massachusetts; Dr. Madeline Spring, Director of the Chinese Language Flagship/ROTC Pilot Program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa; Dr. Joe Allen, Director of the Chinese Language Flagship at the University of Minnesota; Ms. Peggy Boyles, K-16 Educational Consultant from Oklahoma; Dr. David Ellis, Executive Director of the National Foreign Language Center at the University of Maryland; and Dr. Martha Gallagher, Professor of Chinese at the United States Military Academy.

Not only did Yinghua have the opportunity to share the school firsthand with visitors, but the school also had the privilege of sharing its expertise and collective experiences at multiple national conferences. Administrators and teachers were invited to give multiple presentations at STARTALK Conferences in Indianapolis, Indiana, and Denver, Colorado. Another highlight was the National Chinese Language Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, where Yinghua led or served on panels in several different sessions. In

addition, Academic Director, Dr. Lien, shared strategies for effective immersion teaching at ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) in San Antonio, Texas, and at the Chinese Educational Conference in Utah. Again this year, she was invited to conduct teacher training for the Chinese American International School in San Francisco, California. Executive Director Sue Berg and Dr. Lien continue to serve on the CELIN (Chinese Early Language and Immersion Network) National Advisory Committee, an arm of the Asia Society. Through this venue, Yinghua regularly contributes curricular and program development expertise for the benefit of current and prospective administrators and teachers. Lastly, in a rare opportunity, Mrs. Berg was invited as the only delegate from the United States to attend the 3<sup>rd</sup> *seminaire des sections internationales de chinois* in France; the conference was a gathering of French schools that offer Chinese and representatives of Hanban, the Ministry of Education in China.

Dr. Shuhan Wang, Director of the Asia Society's Chinese Early Language and Immersion Network (CELIN) based in New York, calls Minnesota a "hidden gem" in the immersion movement. Dr. Tara Fortune, Director of the Immersion Research and Professional Development Program at the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition at the University of Minnesota states, "These students are well positioned to compete in a global market; the language is a key part of what they will offer." Yinghua is proud to be a part of such important work.

# School Enrollment

## 2014-15 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Students attended Yinghua from 78 metropolitan zip codes, including urban, suburban, and rural areas. 40% were from Minneapolis and 17% were from Saint Paul. There has been an increase in Minneapolis residents each year since the school moved from Saint Paul to Minneapolis in 2009, increasing four percentage points from 2013-14 to 2014-15.

### DEMOGRAPHIC MEASURES: TWO-YEAR COMPARISON

Category	2013-14	2014-15
Geography	75 metro zip codes	78 metro zip codes
	36% Minneapolis	40% Minneapolis
	20% Saint Paul	17% Saint Paul
Ethnicity	47% Asian Pacific Islander	43% Asian Pacific Islander
	46% Caucasian	48% Caucasian
	4% African American	5% African American
	2% Hispanic/Latino	3% Hispanic/Latino
	1% Native American	1% Native American
English Language Learners	7% ESL	8% ESL
	4% Heritage speakers of Chinese	4% Heritage speakers of Chinese
Free and Reduced Lunch Qualified	13%	15%
Special Education	8%	7%



## STUDENT MATRICULATION

In the 2014-2015 school year, Yinghua’s first class of full immersion students (comprised of students who had been in kindergarten when the school began in 2006) graduated from eighth grade. This cohort consists of 17 students, and is the fourth group of eighth grade graduates of Yinghua Academy.

Because Yinghua does not have articulated high school partnerships, these students will go on to various metro area public, charter, and private high schools, including the Blake School, Centennial High School in Circle Pines, Central High School in St. Paul, Connections Academy, DeLaSalle High School, Eden Prairie High School, Irondale High School in New Brighton, Minnesota Online High School, Mounds View High School, Roseville Area High School, St. Anthony Village High School, and St. Paul Academy. We continue to forge important relationships with schools across the Twin Cities so that our students are able to make informed choices with our guidance as to best fit for each individual student and family. Last year we hosted a panel of high school administrators from four area high schools and included Yinghua graduates who attend these schools, as a way to build connections and answer questions of our current middle school families. This year we hosted a “pre-college expert” guidance counselor from an area high school, who spoke to middle school families along with Yinghua graduates who shared their experiences.

This year marked the graduation of Yinghua’s first cohort of full immersion students who potentially entered as kindergartners in 2006. By nurturing a close relationship with alumni, administration is able to further assess and refine the quality of its elementary to middle school program. Feedback from one alum parent is reflective of many: “Not only is our daughter incredibly prepared academically (the math and Chinese are a bit too easy for her) but she is absolutely prepared socially. What a well-rounded education she has received from Yinghua...her time management and organizational skills are great!”

As noted above, Yinghua’s fundamental growth model has been based on adding one grade each year. The following tables set forth Yinghua’s historical and projected enrollment by grade level. The information below follows school years (September-June) and the number represents actual average head counts based on state-reported data.



### HISTORICAL ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
K	26	48	76	78	77	98	107	109	134
1	24	46	51	77	77	78	104	110	112
2	15	25	52	52	76	76	72	98	109
3	11	21	24	47	52	70	68	69	89
4	N/A	18	27	25	44	43	66	65	66
5	N/A	N/A	15	25	24	40	39	56	63
6	N/A	N/A	N/A	11	24	22	28	27	53
7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	11	18	17	17	25
8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	11	13	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>564</b>	<b>666</b>

Source: MARSS reports, using most representative enrollment data from ~ October 1 each year

### PROJECTED ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	2015-16 Projected*	2015-16 Projected**	2015-16 as of September 11, 2015	2016-17 Projected**	2017-18 Projected**
K	112	112	112	112	112
1	112	134	139	112	112
2	106	106	110	132	106
3	99	104	106	104	125
4	83	85	90	101	98
5	55	63	63	85	96
6	44	54	54	53	72
7	37	49	52	51	50
8	23	23	25	49	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>819</b>

\*Source: Long Range Budget Model (Version 22 June 17, 2013) issued with Yinghua Academy Bond Offering

\*\*Enrollment calculated based on the following attrition rates: K-0%, 1-5%, 2-5%, 3-5%, 4-5%, 5-15%, 6-5%, and 7-5%.

## Student Attrition

Yinghua had exceptional student retention this year, with only 4% of students electing not to return in the fall of 2014-15. This is the strongest retention rate in the history of the school. Historical attrition has ranged from 7 to 12% each year. When looked at by grade, the attrition rate for this year in grades K-4 is 3%, while the attrition rate in grades 5-8 is 7.8%.

An analysis of students who withdrew from September 2014 to August 2015 shows the following:

9 students (7 families) withdrew during the school year

- 3 students moved out of state
- 5 students transferred to another non-immersion neighborhood elementary school
- 1 student transferred to another Chinese immersion school

23 students (20 families) withdrew after the end of the school year

- 8 students (6 families) moved out of state or out of the Twin Cities
- 14 students transferred to another non-immersion school; 9 of these transferred to begin 6<sup>th</sup> grade at their neighborhood middle school

## School Management and Administration

*Susan Berg (Bao Xiaozhang), CEO/Executive Director*

Since January 2012, Mrs. Berg has served as Yinghua's Executive Director. Sue has proven herself to be a collaborative, visionary leader. With 40 years of experience in traditional public, charter, and private schools as both teacher and administrator, her repertoire is vast, giving her a solid foundation from which to tackle day-to-day operations as well as unexpected challenges.

Mrs. Berg has been connected to Chinese language and culture since 2006, when the College Board and the Hanban announced the launch of their cooperative Chinese Guest Language Teacher Program. Twice, in July 2007 and November 2012, Sue was selected to be a member of the Chinese Bridge Delegation, a group of educators from across the US, who toured K-12 schools and universities in China. In addition, her family has hosted three Chinese high school students, developing a close relationship with their families and providing an intimate reference point for Chinese/American cultural appreciation and understanding. Overall, Mrs. Berg has spent much of her career working with an international community of students, families, and colleagues.

*Luyi Lien, Ph.D. (Lien Zhuren), Academic Director*

Dr. Lien has held this critical position since the school's founding in 2006. Respected as a pioneer in Chinese immersion education, she is sought out as a presenter for organizations such as the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the Asia Society. She has led training/mentoring sessions in California and Utah for teachers of Chinese. Recently, language experts from the national STARTALK center recognized the "outstanding expertise, experience, and dedication" of Dr. Lien, the program director.

Dr. Lien holds a PhD from the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota, and has published several elementary level textbooks in Taiwan. She provides daily guidance, support, and resources to all teachers at Yinghua Academy and leads curriculum development for all grades. Dr. Lien and Mrs. Berg work hand in hand with lead teachers to refine curriculum design and delivery, to create proper assessments, and to ensure students' academic success in a rigorous, but well-rounded learning environment; together they are responsible for on-going teacher training specifically focused on immersion techniques, the core knowledge sequence, responsive classroom, and data-driven instruction.

*Jeremy Brewer (Bai Zhuren), Dean of Students*

Mr. Brewer joined Yinghua in 2012, bringing 20 years of experience working with children. His professional background includes experience with private school, extended day, youth camp, and non-profit youth program settings. He specializes in child and adolescent behavior and student management, and most recently was the Student Management Coordinator at the International School of Minnesota. In his current role at Yinghua, Mr. Brewer builds strong mentoring relationships and directs the middle school Student Life Organization at Yinghua. He is responsible for a range of essential

duties, including creating a safe and healthy school climate, managing student behavioral issues, implementing school safety policies, and promoting positive family relationships and school communications.

# Professional Development of Instructional Leaders

Professional development plans were in place for both the Executive Director and the Academic Director for the school year ending June 2015. The plans approved by the board and implementation of the plans are:

*Mrs. Susan Berg, Executive Director*

## **Goal #1: Network with other immersion programs to ensure cutting-edge immersion research and practice**

- Represent Yinghua Academy as a member of the National Advisory Committee for the network of Chinese immersion associates called CELIN, *Chinese Early Language and Immersion Network*. CELIN, an arm of the Asia Society and linked to the Asia Society's Chinese Language Initiatives. While the initial meeting in January 2014 in New York City was paid for by CELIN, most work with CELIN will be long distance or at language-related conferences, such as American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and National Chinese Language Conference (NCLC). Continue to participate as a presenter and panelist. Maximize all opportunities to network with members of the committee.
- Attend the NCLC in Atlanta, Georgia, in April 2015 and co-present several topics with Dr. Lien, with other immersion schools, or with other CELIN committee members. The total cost for this conference inclusive of flights, will be approximately \$2000 from the General Fund.
- Research and visit District of Columbia International School (DCI) opened in 2014 to students in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades from immersion schools within Washington DC to “allow students to continue to pursue a rigorous academic program while building on the language and cultural immersion experiences from their previous schools.” Connect specifically with Head of School for Yu Ying Academy, Maquita Alexander, who serves on the Board of Trustees for DCI. The potential cost to visit DCI may be \$500 from the General Fund.

## **Goal #2: Pursue professional development relative to learning systems to enhance instruction, particularly for the Middle School**

- Continue to work closely with Ellisa Raffa, Executive Director of Minnesota Online High School (MNOHS), to provide advanced Chinese courses online. Both summer and fall 2014 opportunities have been well received, and the expectation is to add courses, one per semester. Costs to the school will be covered by the anticipated STARTALK 2015 grant or by tuition.
- Work with the Search Institute, specifically in their Perseverance Process Workshops as well as their Developmental Relationships Framework.
- Implement best practices in weekly Discovery Classes for students in grades 5-8.

## **Goal #3: Strengthen ties with other outstanding charter school programs within the Twin Cities**

- Join a consortium of Friends of Education schools whose directors meet regularly to tackle timely topics or challenges facing charter schools. Major tasks already being researched and addressed are:
  - Teacher evaluation

- World's Best Workforce
- Branding/marketing
- Licensure of qualified teachers
- Salary compensation
- Employee benefits
- Continue to collaborate with Ann Jurewicz, Director of the Twin Cities German Immersion School, one of the few charter school immersion programs.

**Goal #4: Build a rapport and network with other public and private high school administrators within the Twin Cities**

- Continue to visit high schools of interest to our students and families, a growing list as the number of Middle School students increases. Possible schools are: 1) Mounds View High School; 2) Roseville High School; 3) Minneapolis Southwest; 4) Minneapolis South; 5) DeLaSalle High School; 6) St. Paul Highland Park High School; 7) St. Paul Central; 8) Minnetonka High School; 9) Breck High School; 10) Nova Classical Academy; 11) Blake School; 12) St. Paul Academy
- Invite public and private high school administrators to visit Yinghua during the school day.
- Plan panels of public and private high school administrators to participate in informational sessions for Yinghua students and parents.

**Goal #5: Continue to learn about Chinese culture and language**

- Build on Chinese language acquisition started at University of Minnesota. Research and possibly purchase the Pimsleur Language Program, guaranteed to “have you speaking a language in no time”! Total cost for Pimsleur Language Levels I-IV is \$396.
- Investigate the possibility of growing our study abroad program to include an additional component for teachers or parents, who do not speak Chinese. Initial idea is to lead our immersion student group as well as an English-speaking teacher and parent group. As is customary, the costs for chaperones would be covered by the participants’ fees.

**Goal #6: Take advantage of opportunities to improve organizational leadership**

- Keep abreast of offerings through MN Council of Nonprofits such as “Practical Leadership: Supervising for Employee Engagement” offered on November 19. The typical cost per seminar ranges from \$50-125 for MCN members depending on the length of the offering.

*Dr. Luyi Lien, Academic Director*

**Goal #1: Network with other immersion programs to ensure expertise with cutting-edge immersion research and practice**

- Represent Yinghua Academy and participate in the newly formed network of Chinese Early Language and Immersion Network (CELIN) which is an arm of the Asia Society and linked to the Asia Society’s Chinese Language Initiatives, by contributing articles to support immersion research .
- Attend Minnesota Advocates for Immersion Network (MAIN) events at least two times during the 2014-2015 school year to network with Minnesota immersion programs and learn from other well-developed programs.

- Attend the STARTALK fall conference in October 2014 and spring 2015 in order to meet with field experts and connect with program directors and teachers to ensure our practice stays current.
- Attend The Fifth International Conference on Dual Language/Immersion Education in Salt Lake City, Utah in October 2014 to co-present “Using Authentic Texts to Teach Anchor Standards in K-8 Mandarin Language Classrooms” with Dr. Jennifer Eddy at Queens College and Mrs. Helen Yung at Better Chinese Inc., and attend different sessions to learn from researchers.
- Attend the 8th Annual National Chinese Language Conference (NCLC), organized by the Asia Society and the College Board, in April 2015 to present our experiences and learn from other immersion programs. The total cost for this conference inclusive of flights, will be approximately \$2000 from the General Fund.

**Goal #2: Professional development on online learning systems to enhance instruction at Yinghua**

- Complete 60 hours of online training (reading requirements and practice activities) with Minnesota Online High School and continue to develop the online coursework with MS Chinese teachers.
- Continue co-writing the Minnesota Online High School (MNOHS) advanced Chinese courses with MS teachers. Lead the effort of adding one online course per school year and support MNOHS implementing online courses to allow graduates from Yinghua to continue the study of Chinese.
- Explore Online Learning Consortium website and evaluate online learning resources in order to develop online curriculum and courses for students and teacher training programs.
- Attend Webinar trainings on iPad applications, Google Apps in the Classroom, and Leadership Series to learn how to better integrate technology and online learning tools to support and maximize learning for students at the Middle School level.

**Goal #3: Sustain Yinghua as a leader of the immersion field by cultivating grade team leaders in all subject areas; this year’s focus will be on Chinese teachers**

- Work with teachers to set specific goals for them to gain knowledge and experience in immersion education by having one-on-one meetings.
- Bring teachers to the STARTALK fall conference in October 2014 so that they may benefit from the experiences shared by field experts, meet colleagues from different schools, and exchange ideas.
- Create and provide opportunities for teachers to present their classroom teaching experiences and strategies by inviting them to present at staff meetings.
- Invite and support teachers to facilitate workshops to gain leadership experiences at the Confucius Institute in-service workshop in October 2014 and Singapore Math workshop in November 2014.

**Goal #4: Work on supervisory skills and continue to develop leadership capabilities**

- Read monthly Educational Leadership (EL) magazine, published by ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development).

**Goal #5: Continue to learn up-to-date assessment knowledge**

- Attend Data Management and Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) workshop organized by Friends of Education.



- Keep abreast of the up-to-date language assessment tools including Youth Chinese Test (YCT), The Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK), The ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL), Standards-based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP), and Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).

## Staffing

For the 2014-15 academic year, Yinghua Academy’s budget included the opportunity to employ 41 full-time teachers and 2 part-time teachers. All teachers employed by Yinghua are credentialed or approved for credentialing and meet State requirements for public education instructors. Seventy-four percent (74%) of Yinghua’s faculty have advanced degrees in their fields, including four who have earned a Ph.D. In addition, Yinghua employed 30 non-teaching staff.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY OF TEACHERS AND STAFF

Position	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
					Budgeted	Projected
Teachers	31	39	38	43	47	47
Administrators	2	3	3	3	3	3
Other Instructional Staff	16	16	*15	*16	16	16
Other Staff Members	14	13	14	16	16	16
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>82</b>

\* Other instructional staff includes two (2) Hanban teachers, who are sponsored and paid for by the Hanban (the Office of Chinese Language Council International, an affiliate of the Ministry of Education in China).

Notes: Summary table does not include Yinghua Care. Table does not reflect FTE (full time equivalency). Many individuals listed above were employed part-time. Table above represents positions only, not people who filled the positions. For people, see detail below.

For the 2014-15 school year, the student to teacher ratio (including instructional staff) was approximately 11:1.

The Yinghua Academy teaching staff is selected using a three-tiered interview process; the first interview with the hiring committee, the second interview teaching a model lesson, and the final interview with the administrative team to review policies and procedures, salary and benefit information, and job description.

Once a teacher or other educational staff member is employed at Yinghua, she/he is evaluated three times during the year. Yinghua Academy teachers are also asked to give weekly lesson plans to the Academic Director for review, and participate in monthly curriculum map “check-ins.” All staff also participates in weekly curriculum planning meetings and preparatory time.

The teacher retention rate was a main priority of the school’s continuous improvement work in 2014-15. The retention rate from 2012-13 to 2013-14 was 60% (15 out of 35 teaching positions). After focused effort this past two years, the retention rate from 2013-14 was 89% and from 2014-15 93%, a thirty-three point increase over two years.

The table below gives the current retention rate for the school years 2010-15. This reflects the percentage of teachers employed by Yinghua in September (shortly after the start of a fiscal year) as compared to those employed by Yinghua in May of the prior year (near the end of the prior fiscal year).

**HISTORICAL TEACHER RETENTION RATE**

	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2011-12</b>	<b>2012-13</b>	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
Percentage of Teachers Retained from Prior School Year	72%	50%	82%	60%	89%	93%

An analysis of teacher resignations/departures from the 2014-15 year to the 2015-16 year indicates the following reasons that six teachers are not returning.

- Two teachers moved out of state
- One teacher took a position at a District School close to home
- One teacher resigned to pursue other interests
- Two teachers were not asked to return

# Teaching and Learning in a Q-Comp School

## IMPACT OF TEACHER LEADERS ON STUDENT SUCCESS

Over the course of the year, teacher leaders were able to support both returning and new classroom teachers through ongoing coaching, weekly grade level meetings, and classroom observations. Teacher leaders assisted with lesson planning, specific teaching strategies as well as general classroom procedures and routines. Teacher leaders were also able to provide pre and post observation conferences during the observation cycles, which allowed classroom teachers to obtain immediate feedback and professional advice on lesson planning, differentiation, and the implementation of specific teaching techniques and strategies.

As a result, the work of teacher leaders had a positive impact on teaching and learning over the course of the year. Through ongoing coaching and mentoring, teacher leaders were able to help classroom teachers create an environment that promoted improved interaction between teachers and students.

- Rates of proficiency on NWEA fluctuated slightly, impacted by the growth in enrollment; we had approximately 100 more students in grades 2-8 than the previous year. On NWEA Reading, the percent of students scoring above the national median was 75.6% in spring 2015 versus 80% in spring 2014. Likewise on NWEA math, the rate of proficiency dropped slightly from 91% to 84.1%. We remain committed to achieving proficiency levels with all students.
- MCA scores from May 2015 indicate that 84.4% of all Yinghua students met or exceeded proficiency in mathematics, 83.1% met or exceeded proficiency in reading, and 91% met or exceeded proficiency in science.

Teacher leaders were required to attend weekly meetings and training sessions. During these meetings, teacher leaders discussed specific teaching strategies and techniques with school administrators in order to meet the needs of staff members. All teacher leaders were veteran teachers with prior leadership experience.

All teacher leaders received a score of proficient or higher on their evaluations. These results indicated that their ongoing coaching and mentoring work had a positive effect on their team members. Teachers overwhelmingly reported that the teacher leaders were always available to provide assistance and support to their team members. Yet in an effort to continuously improve, Yinghua Academy will make a collective effort to establish a more specific focus for teachers to work toward in the coming year.

## IMPACT OF GRADE LEVEL TEAMS ON STUDENT SUCCESS

Grade level teams were required to meet for at least 60 minutes every week. This time allowed grade level teams to share what was working in the classroom as well as those areas that needed improvement. Grade level teams were able to brainstorm different activities, share reading strategies, and discuss possible interventions. These meetings were also used to layout our DDI (data driven instruction) process. Grade level teams would discuss exactly what needed to occur before, during, and after each assessment cycle. Classroom teachers were able to quickly implement this newly acquired knowledge into their classroom instruction.

Teacher learning from grade level teams had a positive impact on student achievement as is indicated by the NWEA and MCA growth identified above. At the beginning of the school year, classroom teachers analyzed data from the Fall NWEA assessments to determine areas that were in need of improvement, paying close attention to teaching strategies as well as the pacing of the curriculum. As the year progressed, classroom teachers were able to use formative and summative assessments within the classroom to target particular areas that were in need of improvement. Mentor teachers would also meet with the Academic and Executive Directors to discuss assessment results and generate topics that would be beneficial to new teachers. During grade level meetings, teachers would analyze student work samples and assessment data to guide future instruction. Through the use of data driven instruction, classroom teachers were able to focus on the needs of their students.

# Curriculum

Yinghua’s K-8 academic curriculum follows Minnesota Standards, Common Core standards, the Core Knowledge Sequence, and national standards for foreign language education. The sequence is based on the Core Knowledge Sequence, a systematic model of education in which each successive year of education is built on what children have learned in prior years. The Core Knowledge Sequence is based on the notion that, although current events and technology are constantly changing, there is a body of lasting knowledge and skills that form the core of a strong K-8 curriculum.

The school’s Academic Director, Dr. Luyi Lien, leads all curriculum development, ensuring that the content delivered in Mandarin covers all Minnesota State Standards and the Core Knowledge Sequence, building both knowledge and Mandarin fluency. Dr. Lien works with other immersion scholars from the University of Minnesota’s Department of Curriculum and Instruction, the Center for Applied Linguistics, the Confucius Institute of Minnesota, the Asia Society, the National Foreign Language Center, and other programs nationwide to continually evolve the program and develop curriculum incorporating the latest research.

Yinghua is a full immersion school. Material taught in Chinese is not translated into English later in the day or week. Students in kindergarten through fourth grade receive all core subject instruction in Chinese. To prepare for success in high school, middle school students shift to a “language maintenance” model with fifty percent of their day in Mandarin.

The school has implemented Professional Learning Communities for all instructional staff and trains staff in Differentiated Instruction to meet every student’s needs and challenge every learner. Yinghua has established a data-driven instruction protocol to closely monitor students’ progress with formal and informal assessments, and uses student assessment data to improve and inform instruction at all levels throughout the year. Yinghua uses a variety of assessments to measure student achievement, including standardized tests, student academic performance-based assessments, portfolios of student work, teacher observation, and classroom-based assessment.

Rigorous academic programming is a critical part of all curriculum design and implementation across subject areas. Language curricula are aligned across Chinese and English, enabling teachers to synchronize lesson plans. This simultaneous study accelerates the transfer of literacy skills and enables students to learn content in both languages. Highlights of the curriculum and instruction at Yinghua include:

## CHINESE LANGUAGE ARTS AND CONTENT-BASED INSTRUCTION IN CHINESE

Full-day kindergarten and first grade students work 90% of their academic day in Mandarin, with the exception of specialists (i.e. Art, Physical Education and Music) who teach in English. Yinghua instructs with a total language immersion model and places high priority on preserving the integrity of the immersion focus by not introducing English Language Arts until second grade when Chinese is solidly

established. In preparation for Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments, first administered in third grade, assessment-based content is incorporated in Chinese in immersion classroom curricula. The percent of time spent working in English increases to approximately 50% for 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades, which gradually prepares students for a successful transition to a traditional high school, while continuing to enhance and maintain the students' Mandarin skills.

The Mandarin Chinese immersion program incorporates both content-based instruction (CBI) and thematic-based instructional approaches. The full early immersion model program that Yinghua adheres to was designed in consultation with the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and the University of Minnesota Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA). Yinghua's program is internationally recognized as a dynamic example of language immersion best practices.

Yinghua immersion classroom teachers participate in training to ensure that all instruction is delivered based on the best practices of immersion and foreign language research, while also following the guidelines of Minnesota state educational standards for each academic subject content area and National Standards for Foreign Language Learning. Chinese Language Arts teachers use the Core Knowledge Sequence as the backbone of the curriculum and use the responsive classroom approach to promote character education and increase social language usage. All Chinese immersion teachers attend workshops for professional development and have formed support groups to discuss differentiation instruction and strategies for teaching Chinese characters.

Immersion teachers employ innovative teaching strategies such as: integration of language, content, and culture; feedback techniques for continuous growth and improvement of accuracy; making input comprehensible with body language and visuals; creating a language-rich learning environment; using effective teacher talk such as enunciation, repetition and rephrasing; and promoting student output and attending to diverse learner needs, with strategies such as cooperative learning, student choice, learning centers, and presentation of material in a variety of learning styles.

Yinghua's Chinese Language Arts curriculum includes modern and classical literature, informational texts, and the foundational skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Topics integrate history, social studies, science, and technical subjects. Classical literacy is incorporated during grades K-8 in a variety of forms to support students' language and cultural understanding. In middle school, Chinese Language Arts systematically introduces classical Chinese to widen the scope of students' Chinese language knowledge and advance their literacy ability.

## MATHEMATICS

Yinghua uses Singapore Math, an internationally recognized applied mathematics curriculum which helps students understand "the why" behind math concepts. Although math is taught in Chinese at all grade levels, Singapore Math workbooks are published in English, which permits parents to assist with homework, assigned in both Chinese and English. Mathematical concepts are understood first in a concrete manner, then the student illustrates the problem pictorially, and finally the concepts are



represented in abstract, mathematical form. In middle school, math is offered in three levels per grade. All levels are at or above grade level with differences in pacing. Level 1 begins with pre-algebra in fifth grade and graduates students prepared for high school geometry. Level 2 students complete geometry and graduate from Yinghua prepared for high school algebra II. Level 3 students complete algebra II and graduate from Yinghua prepared for high school pre-calculus.

### YINGHUA MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH CURRICULUM

Math Group	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Ready for Grade 9
Level 1	Intro to Pre-Algebra	Pre-Algebra	Intro to Algebra I	Algebra I	Geometry
Level 2	Intro to Pre-Algebra	Intro to Algebra I	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II
Level 3	Pre-Algebra	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II	Pre-Calculus

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

In English Language Arts (ELA), the school uses the 2013 *Reading Street* series (published by Pearson Education, Inc.) as a foundation for grades two through five. This is supplemented with novels, a poetry curriculum, and other primary sources. The program meets the requirement of Common Core Standards, which focus on reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language usage components and aligns with the most current Minnesota State Standards for ELA. The Yinghua ELA curriculum is customized for quick “ramp-up” since students begin formal ELA studies two years later than usual. Early exposure to literary circles, composition, research, journal writing, speech, and debate provides a foundation for middle school ELA. Grades six through eight use *Prentice Hall Writing Coach*, *Prentice Hall Literature: Common Core Edition* and *Sadlier Vocabulary Workshop* (Levels A, B and C for grades six, seven and eight respectively). Each year, middle school students read three important works of literature including selections such as *A Single Shard* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

### SCIENCE

Yinghua’s science curriculum is aligned to the current Minnesota State Science Standards and with national standards published by the National Research Council. Yinghua also incorporates core knowledge standards from the Core Knowledge foundation. At the elementary school level (grades K-4), science is taught in Chinese immersion classrooms. Science at the middle school level (grades 5-8) is taught in English. Elementary and middle school science teachers work together to solidify the sequence of science curriculum from K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The standards incorporate the nature of science and technology, the connection between science and engineering, and earth, life, and physical sciences throughout the grade levels.

Middle school science at Yinghua includes the disciplines of Biology, Ecology, Geology, Meteorology, Astronomy, Chemistry, and Physics. Instruction emphasizes both the methods of doing science and the understanding of important science concepts. Students are taught in an inquiry method that

encourages them to ask questions based on direct observations made from hands-on experiments, academic reading, and multimedia presentations. Students complete research projects as well as design and conduct their own investigations. Important science concepts are constructed and internalized as students make connections between life experiences and classroom learning of the science disciplines.

## SOCIAL STUDIES

In kindergarten through fifth grade, social sciences are taught in the Chinese immersion classroom where teachers address Core Knowledge topics such as the Thirteen Colonies, US presidential biographies, land formations and geographical terms, Minnesota history, and the Inuit and Anasazi cultures, as well as Chinese history topics such as the Qin Dynasty and Emperor Qin Shi Huang; the Han, Tang and Song Dynasties; and the Chinese Zodiac. Sixth through eighth graders' social studies courses are taught half in Chinese and half in English depending on the topic. Subjects include the histories of the Ming and Qing Dynasties; the inventions of Ancient China; Chinese Opera; Ancient Greece and Rome; the European Renaissance and Reformation; the American Revolution; the US Constitution and Bill of Rights; the US-Dakota War from each side's perspective; US immigration; the Great Depression; the Sino-Japanese War; WWII and the Holocaust; global citizenship; the impact of human beings on the environment; and current world and local affairs.

## SPECIALIST CLASSES

Recognizing the connections between art, music, and physical education, and overall academic achievement, Yinghua maximizes student exposure to these subjects. Monthly whole school "theme webs" interweave language, content, and culture objectives in all classes. Students practice music, visual art, and physical education in purpose-built, customized facilities with teachers who are specialists in these areas.

### Music

Music education is mainly in Mandarin and music educators designed the curriculum to build upon the strong listening skills that immersion students develop from a young age. In music classrooms, designed for optimum acoustics, students sing and play recorders as well as percussion and Kodaly instruments. They read, write, analyze, describe, and move to music. Beginning in fourth grade, students may participate in the school's two string orchestras; every fourth grader may choose a string instrument and receive instruction within the music class, during the school day. After fourth grade, orchestra students meet twice a week for practice before school and during recess. Kindergarteners have 60 minutes per week of music; grades one through eight each have two 50-minute periods per week. A Conservatory of Music offers after school lessons to nearly 100 students in Western instruments such as violin and piano as well as the Chinese erhu, a bowed string instrument.

### Visual Art

The art curriculum utilizes Discipline Based Art Education, which introduces drawing, painting, printing, collage, and sculpture and emphasizes art criticism and history. The art studio has a full wall of south-facing windows, ample workspace, and a kiln. Students are encouraged to question and discuss what

they see and create, and they apply their classroom knowledge during trips to museums and art studios. This multi-layered engagement with the visual arts encourages students to apply the observation and analysis skills they are acquiring in other classes. Kindergarteners have 30 minutes per week of art while students in grades one through five each have 50 minutes per week, and sixth through eighth graders have a weekly 90-minute class.

### Physical Education

Physical education (PE) at Yinghua aligns with National Association for Sport and Physical Education standards and emphasizes participation, sportsmanship, skills, character education and safety. Students exercise in a state-of-the art gymnasium (nearly 8,000 square feet) as well as in the expansive Northeast Park with multiple playing fields. Students use roller-blades, bikes, cross country skis, snowshoes, and sleds. Health is integrated into the PE curriculum across grades with extra classes focusing on maturation and healthy choices taught by science and PE faculty in fifth and eighth grades. Kindergarteners have three 30-minute classes while all other students enjoy two 50-minute periods per week.

### Technology

Technological learning is integrated into classroom learning. Seventh and eighth graders all have school-issued iPads. Science, English, and social studies assignments on iPads are frequent and texts often are provided via this medium. Chinese teachers use web-based tools such as *IQChinese*, *5QChannel*, and *VoiceThread*, at all age levels. Video-conferencing helps develop Chinese conversational skills between Yinghua students and sister school peers in China.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Yinghua offers a number of fee-based extracurricular clubs and activities, including Extended Care, Enrichment, Conservatory of Music, and Athletics.

Yinghua Extended Care offers convenient, drop-in morning care from 6:45-7:45am prior to the start of school, and aftercare from 3:30-6:00pm. This fee-based program provides choices for students including homework help, playground, game room, arts and crafts, library time, and computer lab.

The Enrichment program offerings change each term and include a variety of fee-based classes and clubs such as computer coding, Mad Science, chess, art classes, sports offerings, and choir. Some instructors are Yinghua teachers, while others are community members or from outside organizations. Registration for fall 2015 is up 10 percent over fall 2014 participation.

Since 2012, Yinghua's Conservatory of Music continues to offer private lessons to students in instruments of their choice. In fall 2015, registration increased 35 percent over 2014 fall numbers, with well over 100 students receiving instruction in instruments ranging from strings to piano, drums, guitar, voice, and erhu--a traditional Chinese instrument. Enrichment and Music Conservatory programs are

bundled with Aftercare before and after lessons, allowing parents the flexibility to pick up their children anytime up until 6:00pm and improving the oversight of participating students.

Yinghua also offers a popular fee-based athletic program at two levels; in-house sports serve students in grades K-4 while traveling sports teams are an option for students in grades 5-8. The younger students can pick from soccer, floor hockey, basketball, track and field, and sports sampler. Older students participated in a conference of similar sized schools that provided healthy competition in soccer, volleyball, basketball, and cross country running. This year we look forward to adding a cross country ski team as well as track and field. The ability to host home games for basketball and volleyball in our new state-of-the-art gymnasium has been an added bonus for players and fans, as well as a valued amenity amongst the schools in our conference.

## Assessment and Accountability Data

Yinghua Academy uses a variety of assessments to measure student achievement, including standardized tests, academic performance-based assessments, portfolios of student work, teacher observation, and traditional formative and summative assessments. Throughout the school year, educational staff works with the Academic Director and Executive Director to develop units and lessons in accordance with the curriculum map as well as to collect data on academic achievement in the areas of Chinese and English Language Arts, math, science, and social studies.

The following standardized testing occurred for the 2014-15 school year:

- Statewide MCA-II for grades 3-8 in math and reading; grades 5 and 8 in science
- NWEA for grades 1-8
- SOPA (Student Oral Proficiency Assessment) for grades K, 2, and 5-8
- Youth Chinese Test (YCT) Assessment of student Chinese reading comprehension and writing, grades 4-8

Results for MCA, NWEA, SOPA, and YCT assessments follow. The MCA and NWEA data are organized according to what is required in Yinghua's charter contract with Friends of Education. School Culture goals from the charter contract are also included.

## Academic Performance

Yinghua's academic performance is exceptional and was recognized by Friends of Education, the school's authorizer, as a major factor warranting the awarding of a five-year contract renewal, the maximum allowed by law, beginning July 1, 2014. The school made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year of the previous three-year contract. On the newly published school report card for 2014-2015, Yinghua Academy was designated as a REWARD school; REWARD schools by definition are in the top 15 percent of Title I schools based on their Multiple Measurement Rating (MMR). Because this is the first year that Yinghua was a Title I school, it is also the first time that the school was eligible for this distinction. Overall, the school has demonstrated impressive student outcomes and success in closing achievement gaps.

In the new charter contract with Friends of Education, the designated compared districts are Minneapolis, St. Anthony/New Brighton, and Minnetonka. Our school's MCA proficiency rates outperformed these three school districts in Math for Grades 3 to 8; Reading for Grades 6-8; and Science for Grade 5 and Grade 8. Despite our high proficiency rate in reading and math, our students still show significant growth. Specifically, 38.1 % of students in reading and 30.7% of students in math attained high growth status.

In an effort to constantly improve, Yinghua is focused on closing the gap between different sub-group students. So far, we are on the right track; however, the two sub-groups that will need added attention are special education students and the free/reduced lunch population. Using Title I funds, we will provide intensive academic support for academically-disadvantaged students.

In Mandarin testing, Yinghua students are on track to advance approximately one scale per year on the Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA), including 8th grade at level eight, which is the second highest of nine possible levels in Mandarin. On the Youth Chinese Test (YCT), the majority of 4th-8th grade students passed the highest level (Level 4) with 88.7% of students passing Level 4 by 5th grade.

The Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) is a new tool we used to assess our students' Mandarin oral proficiency this year. According to this measure, our students performed one level lower than our predicted results. After closely studying the results, we are consulting with field experts to determine two things: 1) Was the OPI the right tool? ; 2) Were our predictions unrealistic?

Internally, in order to promote Chinese language, reading and literacy, we instituted a Chinese dictionary contest for grades 3 to 8 and a Chinese speech contest in grades 5 to 8. The Chinese dictionary contest encouraged students to look up unfamiliar words in a dictionary to find answers. The speech contest provided an opportunity for students to write their own speeches and to present their ideas to the public. The results were promising in that students gained confidence in using tools to enhance their Mandarin learning.

Achievements of a more qualitative nature include the following: 7th and 8th grade students involved in Yinghua's Student Life Organization attended the second ever WE Day along with 18,000 youth to celebrate the power of American youth to create positive and lasting change locally and globally. In summer 2015, 15 middle school students along with Academic Director Dr. Luyi Lien completed a study-tour of China including a visit to Yinghua's sister school in Inner Mongolia, China. In addition, during

Yinghua’s fall Read-A-Thon, students read an impressive total of minutes in English or Chinese and earned over \$32,000 for the school’s library. As a culmination to the school year, every Yinghua student from K-8 participated in Yinghua’s Academic Performances, which showcased the children’s spoken and written language, creativity, and critical thinking.

**GOAL 1: STATE ASSESSMENT TESTS (40% WEIGHT)**

**Sub Goal 1.1: Absolute Proficiency**

By the conclusion of FY2017, the school-wide proficiency rate will be no less than 89% for math. Reading proficiency will be 75% for grades 3 – 5 (consolidated) and 87% for grades 6 - 8 (consolidated) to reflect the research-based increase in native language acquisition over time in immersion programs.

<b>Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)</b>	<b>Goal by FY2017</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>
Math G3-8	89%	84.4%	N/A	N/A
Reading G3-5	75%	83.1%	N/A	N/A
Reading G6-8	87%	83.0%	N/A	N/A

*Results:* To be assessed at the conclusion of FY2017.

**Sub Goal 1.2: Comparative Proficiency**

Each year, the School will demonstrate higher grade level and school-wide proficiency rates than the Minneapolis school district for reading, math, and science (for the same grades as offered by the School). In addition, the school will achieve school-wide proficiency rates equal to or higher than the combined average rates of St. Anthony/New Brighton Public Schools and Minnetonka Public Schools according to the following criteria: averaged scores of grades 3-8 in math, of Grades 5 and 8 in science, and of grades 6-8 in reading (to reflect the research-based increase in native language acquisition over time in immersion programs).

<b>2014-15 MCA</b>	<b>Yinghua</b>	<b>Minneapolis</b>	<b>St. Anthony/ New Brighton</b>	<b>Minnetonka</b>	<b>Combined Average</b>
Math G3-8	84.4%	> 46.2%	72.1%	80.4%	> 76.2%
Reading G6-8	83.0%	> 31.5%	61.3%	81.3%	> 71.3%
Science G5 & G8	91.0%	> 37.6%	58.0%	75.6%	> 66.8%

*Results:* The school met this goal.



**Sub Goal 1.3: Growth**

Each year, the School’s growth z-score, as published with the state’s release of MMR data, will exceed 0; and each year in which the number of non-proficient students total 20 or more, at least 50% of those students will achieve high growth in the subsequent year.

MCA	Goal	2014-15
Z-Score	> 0	0.1467
# Non-proficient student (>20)	Yes/No	See below
High Growth % of above in subsequent year	> 50%	See below

*Results:* The School’s growth z-score, as published with the state’s release of MMR data, is 0.1467, which exceeds the contract goal of exceeding 0. The school met this goal.

2015 Math		
# Non-proficient student (>20)	Yes	23
High Growth % of above in subsequent year	> 50%	9 students 39.1%

*Results:* Out of 208 measured students who took the 2015 MCA Math Test, 23 of them were not proficient. Among these 23 students, 9 students made exceptional growth, which means 39.1% of non-proficient students achieved high growth in subsequent year. The school did not meet this goal in math.

2015 Reading		
# Non-proficient student (>20)	Yes	41
High Growth % of above in subsequent year	> 50%	27 students 65.9%

*Results:* Out of the 205 measured students who took the 2015 MCA Reading Test, 41 of them were not proficient. Among these 41 students, 27 students made exceptional growth, which means 65.9% of non-proficient students achieved high growth in subsequent year. The school met this goal in reading.

**Sub Goal 1.4: Achievement Gap Reduction**

By the conclusion of FY2017, for both reading and math, the proficiency rate for each subgroup for which the School had publicly-reportable / sufficient counts in 2013 will be no less than:

$$[\text{One-half of } (100 - 2013 \text{ subgroup proficiency rate})] + 2013 \text{ subgroup proficiency rate}$$

In addition, the difference between the non-FRL proficiency rate in the School and the FRL proficiency rate will be reduced each year in both reading and math.

	[One-half of (100 – 2013 subgroup proficiency rate)] + 2013 subgroup proficiency rate		2013		2014		2015	
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math
Asian	74.4	79.4	73.7 N=133	87.2 N=133	76.6 N=141	85.1 N=141	83.4 N=145	84.1 N=145
White	82.6	83.4	75.0 N=84	91.7 N=84	85.4 N=89	94.3 N=88	83.9 N=143	86.0 N=143
Special Ed	66.5	66.0	34.5 N=29	65.5 N=29	51.7 N=29	58.6 N=29	51.4 N=35	51.4 N=35
FRP	69.4	70.8	59.1 N=22	77.3 N=22	58.6 N=29	69.0 N=29	70.7 N=41	65.9 N=41

**Results:**

There are four sub-groups for which school had publicly-reportable/sufficient counts in 2013. These four subgroups are: Asian, White, Special Ed, and FRL students. The chart above shows the student counts (N) in each year for each sub group. The results show that White students and Asian students are on track. However, special education and free-reduced lunch students showed little to no progress, which could be an important indication for the school to pay more attention to support these two groups of students. To be assessed at the conclusion of FY2017.

The difference between the non-FRL proficiency rate in the School and the FRL proficiency rate will be reduced each year in both reading and math.

2015	Non-FRL	FRL	Difference
Math	87.3%	65.9%	21.4%
Reading	85.0%	70.7%	14.3%

**Results:**

For 2015, the difference between the non-FRL proficiency rate in the school and the FRL proficiency rate for math and reading are 21.4% and 14.3%, respectively. These two numbers will serve as a base line for the school to track whether or not the differences are reduced in both math and reading.

## GOAL 2: CHINESE ACQUISITION (30% WEIGHT)

The following goals are based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines 2012:

### Sub Goal 2.1: Speaking and Listening

Speaking and Listening. Each year, the School will administer a Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA) in at least Kindergarten, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, and 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

80% of immersion students will reach the following proficiency levels:

Grade	SOPA Scale Junior	Goal	2014-15
K	Novice – High	80%	90.2%
2	Intermediate – Low	80%	82.0%
4	Intermediate - Mid	80%	100%

*Results:* The school met this goal.

Each year, the School will administer an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) in at least Grade 6 and 8. 80% of immersion students will reach the following proficiency levels:

Grade	OPI	Goal	2014-15
6	Advanced – Low	80%	6%
8	Advanced - Mid	80%	6%

*Results:* The school did not meet this goal.

## STUDENT ORAL PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT (SOPA) IN MANDARIN CHINESE

The Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA) for Grades 2-8 and Early Language Listening and Oral Proficiency Assessment (ELLOPA) for Grades K-2 are innovative language proficiency assessment instruments designed to allow students to demonstrate their highest level of performance in oral fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and listening comprehension. These interactive listening and speaking assessments are designed for children who are learning a foreign language in a school setting. They include hands-on activities and are conducted entirely in the foreign language. Students are assessed in pairs by two trained test administrators and, during the activities or tasks, are encouraged to interact with each other as well as with the interviewers. The focus of the interview is to determine what the students can do with the language.

The SOPA 9-point scale is:

- |                         |                               |                           |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Junior Novice – Low  | 4. Junior Intermediate – Low  | 7. Junior Advanced – Low  |
| 2. Junior Novice – Mid  | 5. Junior Intermediate – Mid  | 8. Junior Advanced – Mid  |
| 3. Junior Novice – High | 6. Junior Intermediate – High | 9. Junior Advanced – High |

Yinghua student SOPA results demonstrate that language acquisition increases approximately one point (on the SOPA scale) per grade, from a score of ~3.00 in K to a score of ~7.00 in middle school for full immersion students. The first cohort of 8th graders who were full immersion students were tested in 2013-14, and scored 7.11, which matches program expectations. The progress of this cohort can be seen in the table below.

The Yinghua program switches from 90% of instruction in the target language to 50% of instruction in the target language beginning in 5th grade, with the goal of middle school being to maintain the students' Mandarin proficiency while preparing them for advanced placement work in high school.

### HISTORICAL SOPA FLUENCY LEVELS

Grade	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
K	2.58	2.5	3.16	3.21	3.34	3.33	3.55
1	2.98	3.74	-	-	-	-	-
2	4.33	4.94	-	5.49	-	3.29	4.46
3	6.14	5.42	-	-	-	-	-
4	1.99*	4.81	-	6.45	-	-	6.61
5	3.33*	2.64*	5.99	7.32	-	6.01	-
6	-	4.85*	3.93*	8.00	7.45	6.05	OPI
7	-	-	4.76*	4.60*	7.7	6.93	-
8	-	-	-	4.78*	5.4*	7.11	OPI

Note: Boxed cells indicate first class of full immersion students through the years. \* indicates non-immersion students.

### Sub Goal 2.2: Reading and Writing

Each year, the School will administer the Youth Chinese Test (YCT) in at least 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades, and by the end of 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 80% of students will pass YCT Level IV, the highest YCT level.

YCT	Goal	2014-15
% of 5 <sup>th</sup> grade that passed Level IV	80%	88.7%

*Results:* The school met this goal.

#### YOUTH CHINESE TEST (YCT)

The Youth Chinese Test (YCT) is a standardized test developed by the Hanban, the government office in the People's Republic of China charged with oversight of formal study of the Chinese language. It assesses student listening comprehension and reading in Chinese, and additionally, at the Level IV test, Chinese writing ability. Yinghua strives to have its fourth grade students pass YCT Level III or IV at the end of fourth grade. Students who do not pass at the end of fourth grade continue to attempt the test in subsequent years.

#### YCT Levels:

Level I	80 commonly used words and related grammar patterns
Level II	150 commonly used words and related grammar patterns
Level III	300 commonly used words and related grammar patterns
Level IV	600 commonly used words and related grammar patterns

#### HISTORICAL YCT RESULTS

	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
# of Students Taking Test	227	93	87	91
Levels Administered	I, II, III, IV	III, IV	IV	IV
Grades Included	2-8	4-8	4-8	4-7
# of Students Passing	219	82	59	59
Passing Rate	97%	88%	68%	65%

#### GOAL 3: NATIONALLY-NORMED ASSESSMENT (15% WEIGHT)

Each year, the School will administer a nationally-normed assessment in reading and mathematics in at least 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. For students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade who have a national percentile ranking of less than 70% and who remain in the School through the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, at least 50% will increase their national percentile ranking by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

2014-15 NWEA	# of students
Reading: 4 <sup>th</sup> grade with percentile ranking of less than 70%	25
Math: 4 <sup>th</sup> grade with percentile ranking of less than 70%	7

2014-15 NWEA 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	# of students with national percentile ranking of less than 70% in 4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Goal	# of students measured with increased national percentile ranking
Reading	10	50%	100%
Math	4	50%	50%

*Results:* The school met this goal.

## GOAL 4: ACADEMIC CULTURE (15% WEIGHT)

### Sub Goal 4.1: Academic Governance

The School will implement an Academic Governance Plan to critically evaluate and strategically lead the School's academic performance and improvement. The School shall include a summary of its findings in the School's board minutes no less than twice annually.

*Results:* The school has had a formal Academic Committee in place since the strategic plan was completed in 2010. Each spring, the board identifies overarching annual goals in collaboration with the Executive Director and Academic Director, which tie back to the long-term strategic plan. The Academic Committee then proposes board-specific and administrative-specific objectives to meet those goals. These goals for 2014-15 included testing benchmarks in English (math, reading, science) and Chinese (listening, speaking, reading, writing), developing a new assessment for Chinese writing, documenting alternative assessments such as presentations and portfolios, determining a metric for overall school performance, maintaining the school's reputation as a top Chinese immersion school in the country, and fully articulating K-8 curricula in all subjects (a multi-year project which is now completed).

### Sub Goal 4.2: Data-Driven Instruction

The School will continue to implement DDI in math, Chinese Language Arts, and English Language Arts throughout each term with summative assessments in grades KG – 8 on a trimester basis. The staff will review and analyze results for Terms I and II with the Academic Director and will determine an appropriate follow-up method of integrating non-mastered content into subsequent lesson plans. The School will invite Friends to attend Term I and II meetings and alternative assessment events to review results.

The School will create and implement DDI in science throughout each term with summative assessments in grades 5-8 on a trimester basis. The staff will review and analyze results for Terms I and II with the Academic Director and will determine an appropriate follow-up method of integrating non-mastered

content into subsequent lesson plans. The School will invite Friends to attend Term I and II meetings and alternative assessment events to review results.

*Results:* The school has created and implemented DDI summative assessments on a trimester basis in all grades. The assessment dates for 2014-15 school year were as follows:

<b>2014-15 Assessment Weeks</b>	<b>Subjects</b>	<b>DDI results and meeting with the Director</b>	<b>Necessary follow-up</b>
Term I end of term assessment, November 20-26	Math, English, Science, Social Studies, and CLA	December 2-11	December 2-20
Term II end of term assessment, March 3-7	Math, English, Science, Social Studies, and CLA	March 17-21	March 17-27
Term III mid-term assessment, May 29-June 4	Math, English, Science, Social Studies, and CLA	June 9-10	Curriculum meeting and adjustment during summer

Between each term’s *end-of-term* exams, there were unit tests for each unit. The results were discussed in team meetings between team members and the Academic Director. Necessary actions were identified and taken after the unit tests and team meetings.

Friends of Education staff were invited to attend DDI discussion meetings on:

- November 11, 2013 email invited Friends to Dec. 11 DDI meeting; reminder sent
- April 14, 2014 site visit and discussion about DDI with Friends representative

Academic Performances were held on May 16 for grades one through eight, and May 30 for kindergarten. Students used different formats to present their learning. The alternative assessments function as an effective way to assess student’s proficiency level in language, subject content, and culture.

## GOAL 5: ADDITIONAL MEASURES

### Sub Goal 5.1: Attendance

Each year, the School will maintain at least a 95% student attendance rate.

Attendance Rate	Goal	Actual
2014-15	95%	96.5%

*Result:* The school met this goal.

### Sub Goal 5.2: Parent Conference Attendance

At least 95% of families will attend school conferences each year.

Attendance Rate	Goal	Actual
2014-15	95%	Fall 98% Spring 97%

*Result:* The school met this goal.

### Sub Goal 5.3: Professional Development

100% of all staff shall receive professional development each year as demonstrated by school records.

Attendance Rate	Goal	Actual
2014-15	95%	100%

*Result:* The school met this goal.

### Sub Goal 5.4: Chinese Culture

100% of students not otherwise excused will participate in the School's Chinese New Year Performance, as well as Chinese Academic Performances each spring to demonstrate academic and functional language in Chinese.

Attendance Rate	Goal	Actual
2014-15	95%	100%

*Result:* The school met this goal.



## Innovative Practices and Implementation

In 2006, Yinghua Academy established the first Chinese immersion program in the state of Minnesota. Yinghua Academy Chinese language teachers continue to employ and share innovative and creative immersion teaching techniques and strategies, according to the Immersion Teaching Strategies Observation Checklist developed by Tara Fortune, Director of The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA), including:

- Integration of language, content and culture
- Continuous language growth and improvement of accuracy, with feedback techniques
- Making input comprehensible with body language, Total Physical Response, visuals, realia, routines, and prior knowledge
- Creating a rich learning environment for the target language (with written text displayed in hallways and classrooms, native speakers in the classroom, target language resources)
- Using teacher talk effectively, with enunciation, rephrasing, modeling, and consciously recycling vocabulary and language structures
- Promoting extended student output and attending to diverse learner needs, with strategies such as cooperative group learning, student choice, learning centers, and presentation of material in a variety of learning styles

As we begin our tenth year, we know that these techniques contribute to the proficiency of Chinese language ability that students attain and demonstrate during their K-8 education at Yinghua. By immersing students in Chinese language and culture, all students become conversant and literate in the language. In the classroom, Yinghua Academy teachers use Differentiated Instruction to meet the needs of every student and to challenge every learner. Learning is measured through Data-Driven Instruction methods that provide administration and teachers the tools to closely monitor students' progress with formal and informal assessments. In addition, external exams allow the school to determine comparative achievement and growth with other programs.

Outside the classroom, Yinghua Academy supports Chinese language and cultural learning by hosting cultural events, participating in local events such as "Passage to China" at the Mall of America and the Dragon Boat Festival in St. Paul, providing highly polished student performances for the Chinese New Year annual celebration, and through international collaboration with a sister school in China. Not only do middle school students participate in monthly teleconferencing, but Yinghua has hosted students and teachers from the Number 8 Middle School in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, and conducted an annual study abroad trip with middle school students to visit the sister school. This past year's trip took place in June-July, and allowed the students the opportunity to experience a school setting, home stays, and famous landmarks such as the Great Wall and Forbidden City. Yinghua received generous scholarship support from the Hanban, the government office in the People's Republic of China charged with oversight of formal study of the Chinese language, which allowed 15 middle school students to participate in this ultimate immersion experience.

Beginning in fall 2014, graduates of Yinghua, any other 8th grade Chinese immersion program, or a student with equivalent Chinese language skills from any high school in the Twin Cities and beyond, were able to enroll through MNOHS in online advanced immersion language and literature courses designed by Dr. Lien, Yinghua's Academic Director, and taught by Yinghua's Chinese language arts teachers. Now in its second year, additional courses were designed in summer 2015, made possible by a STARTALK grant for \$89,978 for a three week summer program entitled, "Chinese Language, Leadership, and Technology for Middle School Students". As other public, charter, and private high schools across the metropolitan area become familiar with our graduates, they are reaching out to Yinghua to attract our students.

Other innovative practices implemented during 2014-15 included:

### Whole School

- **Experiential learning** through artist residencies, field trips, and community service
- **Music performance**, including March Music Madness (a daylong celebration featuring 300 acts of music to celebrate National Music in the Schools Month), twice annual Orchestra concerts, monthly "performance day" within regular music class, and the continued growth of our Music Conservatory, which provides private and group lessons to nearly 100 students in violin, viola, cello, drums, flute, guitar, erhu, voice, and brass instruments
- **Lifetime sports** and recreational activities such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, sledding, rollerblading, biking, and more that maximized Yinghua's location on Northeast Park. Additionally this year, we installed a climbing wall, funded through donations, to further enhance physical education and celebrate our new space.
- **Support for academic success** through the creation of Homework labs, available before school, with peer tutors as well as teacher support in both Chinese and English as well as Homework FIRST, staffed by Chinese and English speaking teachers, for one-on-one instruction after school
- **Family engagement** through parent education events (such as *Study Skills 101: A Parent's Guide* to support parents and their students as they work to establish effective and efficient study skills and to address homework challenges), Friday Night Roller-skating in the new gym, and drop-in family clay classes on Saturdays
- **Cross-cultural development** among teachers through the Teacher Book Clubs as part of our Professional Learning Communities; titles included *Teach Like a Champion*, *Educating Esmé*, *Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mom*, and *Born to Rise*

## Lower School

- **Chinese writing skills** through the a Lower School Chinese Dictionary Competition and regular essay writing
- **Music development** through the opportunity for every 4th grader to choose either a choir track or a string instrument track for the year. Orchestra students receive small group instruction within regular music classes.

## Middle School

- **Goal and life planning** conversations through the establishment of DISCOVERY course for students in grades 5-8 taught by the Executive Director; the class utilized a program called *Mental Karate*, which is focused on character action, and teaches the basic principles of empowerment, specifically initiative, contribution, discipline, courage, and awareness
- **Leadership development** through the Student Life Organization (SLO) led by a Head Prefect and seven Deputy Head Prefects who oversee departments including Academics, Discipline, Activities, Community Service, Sports, Management, and Lower School. SLO-sponsored activities include Unity Day, Mix-it-Up Lunch, 4th-5th grade late nights, Middle School Dances, a recycling program including a waste sort in the cafeteria, and a used book sale
- **Relationship development** at the annual fall Middle School Retreat, which is focused on team building, environmental studies, and community service
- **Public speaking** through the Middle School Speech Contest
- **Learning with technology** using the One-on-one iPad program for grades 7-8

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Yinghua is achieving its mission of preparing students to be engaged global citizens through rigorous academics and immersion in Chinese language and culture. It's comprehensive, long-term strategic plan supports teaching and learning and is aligned with creating the **World's Best Work Force**. This is supported by the school's measurable results again this past year:

- Top 10% of all state schools ranking in the 2014 Minnesota Multiple Measurement Ratings (MMR)
- Top two of all state immersion schools ranking in the MMR
- First place ranking out of all Minneapolis Public and Charter K-5 and 6-8 High Impact Schools. (School Rating: 92) on the Minneapolis School Finder tool
- Exceptional scores on both the SOPA and YCT tests
- Best student retention in school history, with 96% returning for the 2015-16 school year
- Best teacher retention in school history, with 93% returning for the 2015-16 school year
- Consolidation back into one expanded campus
- Achievement of 20% fund balance
- Selection for Confucius Classroom of the Year award
- Nomination for National Blue Ribbon award through U.S. Department of Education

There is a renewed momentum at the school, due to the physical change of being back together in the new building. In this Year of the Sheep, we appreciated the opportunity for peace and calm – steady student achievement, student growth, and teacher retention. Yet like any great school, we continue to develop each year to offer the strongest education to our students and to remain competitive in the school choice marketplace, for the sole purpose of achieving Yinghua's mission. Above all, Yinghua remains committed to making decisions for the benefit of the students and the long term health of the program at the forefront. Yinghua is a success story because of this commitment.

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