

# YINGHUA ACADEMY 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



Safety, Speak Chinese, Learn, Happiness, Global Citizenship

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# INTRODUCTION

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# INTRODUCTION

## Introduction

Yinghua Academy is a national leader in Mandarin Chinese immersion education and was recognized by the US Department of Education as a National Blue Ribbon school in 2015. When founded in 2006, it became the first Chinese immersion charter public school in the U.S. and the first Chinese immersion school of any kind in the Midwest. Authorized by Friends of Education, Yinghua Academy is a bilingual, tuition-free, public K-8 charter school with an international perspective.

***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. This means that content delivered in Chinese is not translated into English later in the day or week. Students in kindergarten through fourth grade receive most of their core instruction in Chinese. Exceptions include English Language Arts and other specialist classes such as Art, Physical Education or Music for which some faculty are Chinese-speaking and some are English-speaking. Teachers never switch languages in the presence of students. Yinghua's unique program 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 students.



# 2016-17 YEAR IN REVIEW

## 2016-17 Year in Review

In February 2017, Yinghua welcomed the Year of the Rooster in its annual Chinese New Year performance. Middle School English teacher, Bradly Byykkonen, and Academic Director, Luyi Lien, authored this year's script which presented the story of general Zǔ Tì, 祖逖, credited with saying “闻鸡起舞” [wén jī qǐ wǔ], which means “to start practicing at the first crow of the rooster,” or “to be diligent in one's studies.” This story was a metaphor for the year—hard work and discernment were keys to the Yinghua Academy milestones achieved in 2016-17. The school saw strong financial performance and exceptional student retention during its eleventh year. Eklund Consulting led teacher leadership and staff team-building activities, and a new strategic plan was crafted to guide the school through 2020.



Students show their Year of the Rooster drawings.

### ENROLLMENT

In September 2016 Yinghua's retention rate was 93% with a fall 2016 enrollment of 799 students and families coming from 84 metropolitan zip codes. During the 2016 Open Enrollment period, 134 applications were submitted for 25 out of 84 kindergarten openings not filled by siblings. With growth, the school has seen changes in its enrollment subgroups. The ratio of students who qualify for free or reduced price school lunches increased from 12% to 15%, and the percent of students using special education services increased slightly from 6% to 8%. The School Board supports the school's work to increase diversity among Yinghua applicants and appointed a group of stakeholders to assess school equity during the strategic planning process which began at the end of the 2015-16 school year.

# 2016-17 YEAR IN REVIEW

## FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Yinghua's financial successes included receiving the State of Minnesota School Finance Award in 2017, receiving an unqualified FY 2016 audit with no material weaknesses or deficiencies, maintaining a good credit relationship with Drake Bank, strong donations, and ending the fiscal year with a \$589,000 fund balance.

## ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Yinghua was recognized as a 2017 Reward School by the Minnesota Department of Education. Reward Schools are Minnesota's highest performing Title I schools and have demonstrated sustained success in student outcomes. Rankings are based on the Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) which includes data on proficiency, growth and achievement gap reduction.

## INNOVATION, REPUTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

The Minnesota Association of Charter Schools recognized Yinghua Academy with two \$1,000 Innovation Awards during the 2016-17 school year. The December award highlighted Yinghua's partnership with Minnesota Online High School through which Yinghua and other Chinese immersion graduates may take advanced Chinese classes. The April award recognized Yinghua's annual Academic Performances as an alternative form of assessing student progress.

Innovative language immersion study trips for Yinghua Middle School students have been part of the Yinghua curriculum for the past six years. More than two dozen Yinghua students returned from the school's first-ever trip to Taiwan in summer 2016, and in June 2017, 36 students traveled to Beijing and visited sister schools in Inner Mongolia and Shanghai, China, and Shanghai students and teachers visited Minnesota in August 2017. To integrate travel experiences into the life of the school, the school hosted a series of discussions about career paths involving Chinese language; talks were sponsored by STARTALK, a program of the U.S. federal government.

New tutoring programs pairing older and younger students were launched this year to help support learning. Yinghua's partnership with Saint Paul Public Schools was renewed at an augmented level allowing an unlimited number of Yinghua graduates, no matter their home addresses, to enroll at Highland Park Senior High School where immersion-level high school Chinese courses are taught. In May 2017, 24 Yinghua students competed in the Midwest Region Chinese Speech Contest and took home 24 gold, silver and bronze awards.

Yinghua administrators and teachers participated in multiple national and international conferences sponsored by STARTALK, the National Chinese Language Conference (NCLC), the Association of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the Confucius Institute. Executive Director Sue Berg and Dr.

## 2016-17 YEAR IN REVIEW

Luyi Lien serve on the Chinese Early Language Immersion Network (CELIN) sponsored by Asia Society. Locally, Yinghua is engaged with Friends of Education, Charter School Partners, Adaptive School Training, Youth Frontier, the Immersion Research and Professional Development Program at the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition at the University of Minnesota, and the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools. Yinghua is proud to be a partner with so many forward-looking organizations in the important work of educating our youth.



Yinghua's "Emerald Booktastic" team won first place in the First Annual Friends of Education Battle of the Books hosted by DaVinci Academy.

# SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

## School Enrollment

### ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Yinghua Academy is dedicated to a free-access, quality education. As a charter school, Yinghua Academy provides an innovative and successful educational path for all students. Yinghua Academy follows all Minnesota statutes as they relate to application and admission procedures for public elementary schools. Yinghua does not discriminate in any way and all activities follow adopted policy #102 Equal Educational Opportunity. Enrollment is open to all students residing in any school district in Minnesota. Yinghua will accept all applications without question, unless the child does not meet the minimum age requirement for kindergarten as set by the school board prior to the application period. For the 2016-17 school year, a child was required to be five years old on or before September 1, 2016, in order to begin kindergarten.

Each year Yinghua has an open application period; this year that period ran from January 3 to February 10, 2017, for matriculation in the fall of 2017. All procedures and timing in regards to the application period are posted on [www.yinghuaacademy.org](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org) by October 1 and explained through public open houses. Yinghua distributed open enrollment materials for the upcoming school year to the following Minneapolis schools and neighborhood resource centers: Salem Lutheran Church, Watchman Outreach, Camden Community Preschool, Pillsbury United Communities Camden Center, Hennepin County Library North Regional, Minneapolis Urban League, the University of Minnesota Robert J. Jones Urban Research and Outreach Engagement Center, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Venture North (a bike and coffee shop) and Jardin Spanish Immersion Academy on Bloomington Avenue South.

All enrollment applications are time and date stamped upon receipt in the main office. If more applications are received for a grade level than space is available, Yinghua Academy holds a public lottery. In 2017, this lottery was held on Wednesday, February 15, at 6 p.m. in the cafeteria. About 60 prospective families were in attendance. In accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.10, Yinghua offers preference to families with currently enrolled students and to children of staff. In order to benefit from sibling and staff preference, the parents must submit an application before the close of the open enrollment period. Preference is not given for any other reason. The lottery is randomized. Students are also randomly ranked for a waiting list if applicable. In 2017, the school used a computerized random number generator to conduct the lottery, which resulted in a list of admitted students and a wait list by grade. Applications received after the open application period are numbered and responded to in the order in which they are received.

# SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

## ENROLLMENT HISTORY

Yinghua Academy opened in the fall of 2006 with 76 students and grew to a September 2016 enrollment of 803. In 2012, during the school's seventh year, the School Board expanded capacity in kindergarten, first, fifth and sixth grades to improve its financial situation given the high cost of operating two sites and the bond market outlook. In May 2014, the Board expanded capacity to include a fifth kindergarten section for one year, given that the school had a sufficient waiting list to fill the class, a former teacher interested in returning, and space capacity in the new building. Under the current plan, enrollment is predicted to total 827 K-8 students in 2020.

As the larger kindergarten classes of the past five years move through the program, the middle school grades are becoming more populated. Last year was the first year we had two sections of eighth grade. The board is carefully monitoring enrollment and retention and will make adjustments to incoming class sizes if necessary.

## 2016-17 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Students attended Yinghua from 84 metropolitan zip codes, including urban, suburban, and rural areas. 68% were from Minneapolis and 4.8% were from Saint Paul. There has been a steady increase in Minneapolis residents each year since the school moved from Saint Paul to Minneapolis in 2009 with 20% increase from 2015-16 to 2016-17.



# SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

## DEMOGRAPHIC MEASURES: TWO-YEAR COMPARISON

Category	2015-16	2016-17
Geography	86 metro zip codes	84 metro zip codes
	48% Minneapolis	68% Minneapolis
	16% Saint Paul	4.8% Saint Paul
Ethnicity	40% Asian Pacific Islander	36% Asian Pacific Islander
	50% Caucasian	50% Caucasian
	6% African American	5% African American
	3% Hispanic/Latino	3% Hispanic/Latino
	1% Native American	1% Native American
		5% Two or more races
English Language Learners	3% ELL	3% ELL
	4% Heritage speakers of Chinese	3% Heritage speakers of Chinese
Free and Reduced Lunch Qualified	12%	15%
Special Education	6%	8%

## STUDENT MATRICULATION

At the end of the 2016-2017 school year, Yinghua’s third class of full immersion students graduated from eighth grade. This cohort consisted of 48 students and was the sixth group of eighth grade graduates of Yinghua Academy. This brought the school’s total alumni population to 117. Yinghua’s 2017 graduates went on to public, charter and private high schools in the area including Central High School, Cretin-Derham Hall, Highland Park Senior High School, Minnehaha Academy, Nova Classical Academy, St. Paul Academy, The Blake School and Twin Cities Academy. Saint Paul Public Schools invited Yinghua to expand its Memorandum of Understanding guaranteeing reserved 9<sup>th</sup> grade spots for all Yinghua graduates (the 25-student limit was removed). Through Highland, SPPS offers suitably challenging Chinese language courses for immersion students. More than one half of the 2017 graduating class matriculated to St. Paul Highland Park Senior High School.

We continue to forge school relationships so that our families are able to make informed high school choices. For the past three years we have hosted high school panels with administrators from area high schools as a way to build connections and expose current families to an array of educational offerings. This year’s panel included representatives from The Blake School, Cretin-Derham Hall, Highland Park Senior High School (SPPS), Minnehaha Academy, Minnesota Online High School, Mounds Park

# SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

Academy, and Thomas Edison High School (MPS). Minnesota Online High School (MNOHS) provides a platform for our students to take advanced online Chinese no matter where they go to high school.

## HISTORICAL AND PROJECTED ENROLLMENT

The following tables show Yinghua’s school year (September to June) historical and projected enrollment by grade level. Numbers represent 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	2015-16	2016-17
K	26	48	76	78	77	98	107	109	134	111	110
1	24	46	51	77	77	78	104	110	112	139	111
2	15	25	52	52	76	76	72	98	109	110	134
3	11	21	24	47	52	70	68	69	89	104	103
4	N/A	18	27	25	44	43	66	65	66	90	98
5	N/A	N/A	15	25	24	40	39	56	63	63	85
6	N/A	N/A	N/A	11	24	22	28	27	53	57	59
7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	11	18	17	17	25	52	54
8	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	11	13	16	25	49
<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>	<b>751</b>	<b>803</b>

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

# SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

## PROJECTED ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL

Grade	2017-18 Projected**	2017-18 Actual	2018-19 Projected**	2019-20 Projected**	2020-21 Projected**
K	84	84	84	84	84
1	112	112	84	84	84
2	110	108	110	82	82
3	132	129	106	106	80
4	101	103	127	102	102
5	96	95	98	123	99
6	80	78	88	90	113
7	56	59	77	85	86
8	49	52	51	71	78
<b>Total</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>820</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>808</b>

\*Source: Yinghua – Assumptions to Budget Model from Growth Report, Strategic Planning, October 2016.

\*\*Enrollment calculated based on the following attrition rates: K-0%, 1-2%, 2-3%, 3-4%, 4-3%, 5-8%, 6-4%, and 7-8%.



English teacher Kristin Nordvold meets with a small group of students. Yinghua begins teaching English in grade 2.

# STUDENT ATTRITION

## Student Attrition

Yinghua had a retention rate of 98% in the fall of 2017-18. Historical attrition has ranged from 7 to 11% each year. Viewed by grade, the attrition rate for FY18 in grades 1-4 is 1.5% and 3% in grades 5-8.

An analysis of students who withdrew from September 2016 to August 2017 shows the following:

16 students (15 families) withdrew during the school year

- 5 students moved out of state
- 11 students transferred to a non-immersion neighborhood elementary school
- 0 students transferred to another Chinese immersion school

18 students (15 families) withdrew after the end of the school year

- 3 students (2 families) moved out of state or out of the Twin Cities
- 7 students transferred to another school; 6 of these transferred to begin 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade at a neighborhood middle school; and 1 transferee attends a Chinese immersion middle school closer to home
- 2 students will be starting an approved leave of absence and plan to return to Yinghua

### HISTORICAL STUDENT RETENTION RATES

Grade	2012-13	%	2013-14	%	2014-15	%	2015-16	%	2016-17	%	2017-18	%
7 <sup>th</sup> returning to 8 <sup>th</sup>	10/18	56%	14/17	82%	15/18	83%	25/25	100%	48/52	92%	53/52	98%
6 <sup>th</sup> returning to 7 <sup>th</sup>	17/22	77%	18/29	62%	23/29	79%	52/54	96%	52/55	95%	59/59	100%
5 <sup>th</sup> returning to 6 <sup>th</sup>	29/39	74%	29/40	73%	50/55	91%	54/62	85%	58/62	94%	85/78	92%
4 <sup>th</sup> returning to 5 <sup>th</sup>	40/43	93%	55/66	83%	62/65	95%	63/64	98%	86/89	97%	97/95	98%
3 <sup>rd</sup> returning to 4 <sup>th</sup>	66/70	94%	65/69	94%	65/70	93%	90/91	99%	99/103	96%	103/103	100%
2 <sup>nd</sup> returning to 3 <sup>rd</sup>	69/76	91%	70/73	96%	88/95	88%	106/112	95%	105/107	98%	133/129	97%
1 <sup>st</sup> returning to 2 <sup>nd</sup>	71/78	91%	100/105	95%	106/109	97%	108/113	96%	134/137	98%	111/108	97%
K returning to 1st	92/98	94%	105/112	94%	107/111	96%	132/134	99%	111/112	99%	112/112	100%
<b>Average</b>	<b>394/ 444</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>456/ 511</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>516/ 557</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>629/ 655</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>693/742</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>753/736</b>	<b>98%</b>

Note: Retention only counts returning students. Yinghua also added 4 new students in 2016-17 in grades 1-8.

# GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

## Governance and Management

### ELECTION OF YINGHUA ACADEMY BOARD MEMBERS

According to Yinghua Academy bylaws and established procedures, the Yinghua community elects new board members every year. Each parent and legal guardian of a child currently enrolled at Yinghua Academy, each employee of the school, and each Yinghua board member is eligible to vote. Newly elected board members are seated to the board on July 1. The most recent board elections were held May 1 – May 8, 2017, with a public statement by candidates at the Annual Meeting of the School Board on May 1, 2017. Ballots were tallied the evening of May 8, 2017.

### 2016-17 BOARD ROSTER

Name	Board Position	Group Affiliation	Date Elected/ Appointed (App)	Date Seated	Term Expiration	Telephone Number	Meeting Attendance Rate
Chen, Mei	Member	Parent	May 2016	Jul 2016	Jun 2019	612- 670-6270	87%
Gill, Kimberly	Member	Teacher #474966	May 2015	Jul 2015	Aug 2016	651-788-6441	50%
Grubish, Denny	Member	Parent	App Mar 2012; Jun 2013; May 2016	Mar 2012	Jun 2019	612-207-7242	93%
Hanson, Emily	Member	Community	App Nov 2013; May 2014	Nov 2013	Jun 2017	612-968-5014	93%
Lai, Shu-Mei	Member	Teacher #483241	May 2016	Jul 2016	Jun 2019	612-788-9095	73%
Lawrence, Rosemary	Member	Community	Jun 2011; May 2014	Jul 2011	Jun 2017	612-281-7973	73%
Liu, Bo	Member	Teacher #489843	App Aug 2016	Aug 2016	Jun 2018	612-788-9095	100%
Lu, Karen	Chair	Parent	Jun 2011; May 2014	Jul 2011	Jun 2017	612-701-7016	93%
Luedtke, Joel	Member	Parent	May 2015	Jul 2015	Jun 2018	612-518-8053	80%
Mair, David	Member	Parent	May 2016	Jul 2016	Jun 2019	651-330-9392	80%
Matre, Lisa	Member	Parent	App Sept 2015	Sept 2015	Jun 2017	612-781-5783	100%
Schneider, Amanda	Member	Parent	May 2015	Jul 2015	Jun 2018	651-963-4970	80%
Werner, Seth	Member	Community; Parent	Jun 2012; App Sept 2013; May 2015	Jul 2012; Sept 2013	Jun 2018	612-670-4906	60%
Ziolkowski, Christopher	Member	Community	May 2015	Jul 2015	Jun 2018	507-250-1959	87%

*Note:* Biographical information about board members is available on the Yinghua Academy website. Board member email addresses are firstname.lastname@yinghuaacademy.org.

# GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

## 2016-17 MONTHLY BOARD MEETING ATTENDANCE

Jul	Aug	Sept*	Oct*	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May*	Jun
85%	62%	92%	92%	92%	85%	92%	92%	69%	92%	100%	69%

\* In addition to the regular monthly board meetings, the Annual Board Retreat was held in September, a Special Meeting was held in October to work on updating the school's strategic plan, and the Annual Meeting was held in May.

## 2016-17 BOARD TRAINING

Board Members attended the following training sessions:

### *Initial Board Training*

- 8/9/16: University of St. Thomas Charter School Board Training – David Mair
- 12/10/16: University of St. Thomas Charter School Board Training – Mei Chen, Shu-Mei Lai, Bo Liu

### *Ongoing Board Training*

- 3/9/17: Finance: Craig Kepler provided an overview and education session on the EPY/YBC bond acquisition – Denny Grubish, Karen Lu, Lisa Matre, Amanda Schneider, Seth Werner
- 4/17/17: Governance: Amy Mace of Rupp, Anderson, Squires & Waldspurger, P.A. presented information and answered questions about: Open Meeting Law, Disclosure of Educational Data, and Disclosure of Personnel Data – All board members in attendance at monthly meeting
- 5/11/17: Board of Directors Networking and Professional Development sponsored by Friends of Education – Emily Hanson, Lisa Matre, Bo Liu, Amanda Schneider

## BOARD COMMITTEES

The School Board has five committees, listed below. Each committee is chaired by a board member and also has at least one non-board member serving on the committee, with the exception of Personnel which is limited to board members. The role of the Committee Chair is to recruit members, convene meetings, jointly set agendas with the Executive Director, chair meetings, record and file minutes, report back to the board on a regular basis of the committee's progress, and ultimately be accountable for the work of the committee towards its mission and annual goals.

Committee meetings are published on the school's online master calendar, as well as on signs posted at the front of the school. Approved minutes from each committee meeting are distributed in the public board packet at subsequent board meetings. The mission, frequency of committee meetings in 2016-17, and chair for each committee are listed below.

# GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

## 2016-17 BOARD COMMITTEES

Committee	Mission	Meetings	Committee Chair
Academic	Prepare students to be engaged and productive global citizens by providing a research-based, rigorous, Chinese immersion educational program. Develop an ongoing, job-embedded program of professional development for staff.	Met seven times: Sep 1, 2016 Oct 6, 2016 Nov 14, 2016 Feb 23, 2017 Apr 10, 2017 May 25, 2017 Jun 22, 2017	Karen Lu
Finance/Facilities	Assist the Yinghua School Board and CEO/Executive Director to ensure effective allocation of financial resources and timely and accurate reporting to meet long-term financial goals (inclusive of facility planning and maintenance).	Met ten times: Aug 11, 2016 Sep 8, 2016 Oct 13, 2016 Nov 10, 2016 Dec 8, 2016 Jan 12, 2017 Feb 9, 2017 Mar 9, 2017 Apr 13, 2017 May 11, 2017	Denny Grubish (Jul – Sept 2016)  Amanda Schneider (Oct 2016 – Jun 2017)

# GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Committee	Mission	Meetings	Committee Chair
Governance	Assume primary responsibility for matters pertaining to Board recruitment, nominations, orientation, training, and evaluation in accordance with the bylaws of Yinghua Academy as well as established policies and practices approved by the Board. Assist the Board with policy development and oversight.	Met eleven times: Jul 13, 2016 Aug 4, 2016 Sep 1, 2016 Oct 6, 2016 Dec 5, 2016 Jan 5, 2017 Feb 2, 2017 Mar 2, 2017 Apr 20, 2017 May 4, 2017 Jun 1, 2017	Lisa Matre (Jul 2016 – Jan 2017)  Denny Grubish (Feb 2017 – Jun 2017)
Development	Develop a long-term fundraising plan, cultivate prospects, and provide oversight for the school's two annual giving campaigns (Give to the Max and Red Envelope) in partnership with the CEO/Executive Director and YACA/YAF.	Met nine times: Aug 3, 2015 Aug 24, 2015 Sep 28, 2015 Oct 26, 2015 Nov 30, 2015 Feb 29, 2016 Mar 28, 2016 Apr 25, 2016 May 23, 2016	Joel Luedtke
Personnel	Assist the Yinghua School Board in evaluating the performance of the CEO/Executive Director, and support the CEO/Executive Director in reviewing policy, procedures, and job descriptions pertaining to personnel administration and staffing.	Met seven times: Aug 9, 2016 Sept 15, 2016 Oct 11, 2016 Jan 10, 2017 Feb 13, 2017 Apr 11, 2017 May 9, 2017	Emily Hanson



# GOVERNANCE BY AREA

## GOVERNANCE BY AREA

The School Board conducts its meetings according to the prioritized needs of the school, balancing agenda items to meet short and long term goals. There were fifteen meetings in FY 2017, including the annual meeting, the board retreat, and one special meeting. Below is a rough breakdown of school board agenda items from the year, categorized by the time spent on each key category.

### 2016-17 BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

Topic	Estimated # Hours	Estimated % of Total Hours
Academics	2.5	8%
Finances/Facilities	3.25	10%
Operations	15.7	50%
Future Planning	9.8	31%

*Note:* Hours estimated using official meeting minutes. Time does not take into account committee meetings.

## 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 more than 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, she was selected to be a member of the Chinese Bridge Delegation, a group of educators from across the U.S., 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.

# GOVERNANCE BY AREA

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

Dr. Luyi 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 Asia Society. She has led training and mentoring sessions in California and Utah for teachers of Chinese. Language experts from STARTALK have recognized the "outstanding expertise, experience, and dedication" of Dr. Lien.

Dr. Lien holds a Ph.D. from the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota and has published elementary level textbooks in Taiwan. She provides daily guidance, support, and resources to teachers at Yinghua Academy and leads curriculum development for all grades. Dr. Lien and Mrs. Berg work together with lead teachers to refine curriculum design and delivery, create assessments and ensure academic success in a rigorous and 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. He has more than 20 years of experience working with children with work in private school, extended day, youth camp and nonprofit youth program settings. He specializes in child and adolescent behavior and student management. Mr. Brewer builds strong mentoring relationships and directs the middle school Student Life Organization at Yinghua. He is responsible for 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

A professional development plan, approved by the School Board, was in place for the Executive Director for the school year ending on June 30, 2017:

*Mrs. Susan Berg, Executive Director*

**Goal 1: Collaborate with experts and colleagues to improve and refine organizational leadership.**

- Work closely with author and educator Nathan Eklund to cultivate a workplace that works well for teachers and enhance the relationship between teachers and administrators
- Tap the wisdom of strategic planning consultant Anne Sturdivant to create plans for Yinghua's next growth cycle.

# GOVERNANCE BY AREA

## **Goal 2: Network with other immersion programs to ensure cutting-edge immersion research and practice.**

- Participate in the MN Educators' Delegation to China from October 15 to 26. Serve on "Administrators' Perspective on US K-12 Education" panel.
- Continue to represent Yinghua Academy as a member of the Chinese Early Language and Immersion Network (CELIN) a national advisory committee of Asia Society's Chinese Language Initiatives. Maximize all opportunities to network with members of the committee.
- Attend the National Chinese Language Conference in Houston, Texas, April 6 to 8, 2017.
- Serve on the advisory board of Anaheim, California's Frontiers Academy, a kindergarten through grade 3 private Chinese immersion school.

## **Goal 3: Pursue professional development relative to learning systems that will enhance instruction, particularly for Middle School.**

- Continue work with the Search Institute's Perseverance Process Workshops for middle school students.
- Develop curriculum for the Yinghua Middle School Discovery Class by using Thrively, a website through which teachers can match student interests with learning activities.

## **Goal 4: Continue to strengthen ties with other outstanding charter school programs in the Twin Cities.**

- Participate in and host meetings of Friends of Education school directors to tackle timely topics facing charter schools such as:
  - Teacher evaluation,
  - Student management systems,
  - Branding, marketing and fundraising,
  - Salary and compensation,
  - Employee benefits, and
  - Transportation.

## **Goal 5: Continue to network with other Twin Cities public and private high school administrators for the benefit of current students and alumni.**

- Continue to visit high schools of interest to our students and families.
- Develop and maintain strong ties with alumni and alumni families to gather feedback about improving and enhancing Yinghua's program.

*Dr. Luyi Lien, Academic Director*

## **Goal 1: Connect with National Immersion and Language experts and study trends of language education to better define our school's direction in the future.**

# GOVERNANCE BY AREA

- Invited by the Chinese Flagship Center to work with international experts on an evaluation team. Evaluate Chinese Flagship Center at the University of Portland including its immersion track and impact on bilingual professions.
- Attend the STARTALK fall 2016 and spring 2017 conferences to meet with field experts and connect with program directors and teachers. Ensure our practice stays current.
- Attend the 2016 ACTFL Annual Convention to present Yinghua’s study abroad experience, Nov. 18-20, 2016. Attend the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual National Chinese Language Conference (NCLC), organized by Asia Society and the College Board, April 6-8, 2017, in Houston, Texas, to present our experiences and learn from other immersion programs.

## **Goal 2: Refine and review teaching strategies for immersion and subject-matter classes to improve student academic achievement.**

- Review and explain theme web work and its impact on an immersion education environment. Coach subject-matter teachers on adapting immersion teaching concepts to support student learning. Work with teachers to study, discuss and refine the Yinghua immersion experience.
- Review and discuss teaching strategies with teachers. Special focus is connecting subject-teaching strategies and immersion-teaching strategies.
- Focus on online teaching strategies. How can Yinghua increase student interaction with each other and increase the time they are immersed in Chinese language and culture. Network with the MNOHS online teaching coach and learn from other online language course experts.

## **Goal 3: Increase time in classrooms to coach teachers, improve supervisory skills and continue to develop leadership capabilities.**

- Attend two workshops to refresh coaching skills: (a) *Agents of Change: How Content Coaching Transforms Teaching and Learning* on September 19, 2016, organized by Minnesota Department of Education; (b) A reading seminar: *An Interactive Approach to Reading Strategies*. This seminar will take place on Nov. 15, Jan. 24 and March 7. This workshop is organized by Friends of Education.
- Attend leadership coaching meetings with Nathan Eklund to learn peer leadership development and growth.
- Read monthly Educational Leadership (EL) magazine published by ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development).

**Goal 4: Continue to learn and support teachers to learn up-to-date assessment theory and techniques.**

- Keep abreast of language assessment tools such as Youth Chinese Test (YCT), the Chinese Proficiency Test (HSK), ACTFL Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL), Standards-Based Measurement of Proficiency (STAMP) and Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).
- Attend the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines Familiarization Workshop and learn about the rating requirements and scales.



School leaders met with University of Iowa professor of foreign language education Michael Everson and visitors from Singapore American School.

# STAFFING

## Staffing

For the 2016-17 academic year, Yinghua Academy’s budget included the opportunity to employ 46 full-time teachers and 7 part-time teachers. All teachers employed by Yinghua are credentialed or approved for credentialing and meet state requirements for public education instructors. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of Yinghua’s faculty have advanced degrees in their fields, including three (3) who have earned a Ph.D. In addition, Yinghua employed 35 non-teaching staff.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY OF TEACHERS AND STAFF

Position	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 Budgeted	2017-2018 Projected
<b>Teachers</b>	31	39	38	43	47	53	56
<b>Administrators</b>	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
<b>Other Instructional Staff</b>	16	16	*15	*16	*16	17*	18
<b>Other Staff Members</b>	14	13	14	16	21	27	28
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>105</b>

\* Other instructional staff includes three (3) Hanban teachers, who are sponsored and paid for by Hanban, the Ministry of Education in China.

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

# STAFFING

## 2016-2017 TEACHING STAFF

	Name	File Folder No.	Assignment	Part-Time	Years Employed by the School	Left During 2016-17	Not Returning 2017-2018
1	Xu Yang (Fiona) Zhang	997230	Kindergarten Classroom Teacher		4		
2	Vickee Nelson	997811	Kindergarten Classroom Teacher		8		
3	Zhouyun Li	996639	Kindergarten Classroom Teacher		6		x
4	Yi Li	997374	Kindergarten Classroom Teacher		7		
5	Chia-Yu Lin	997722	First Grade Classroom Teacher		5		
6	Hui-Tzu Wu	997911	First Grade Classroom Teacher		6		
7	Suiru Shi Seberson	998127	First Grade Classroom Teacher		6		
8	Ye Long	996637	First Grade Classroom Teacher		< 3		
9	Hailei Xie	997912	Second Grade Classroom Teacher		6		
10	Ye Cheng	997373	Second Grade Classroom Teacher		4		
11	Fang Wu	998091	Second Grade Classroom Teacher		8		
12	Wei Jiang	996638	Second Grade Classroom Teacher		< 3		
13	I-Hsuan Lai	996198	Second Grade Classroom Teacher		1		
14	Shu-Ching Lee	997860	Third Grade Classroom Teacher		6		
15	Shu-Mei Lai	483241	Third Grade Classroom Teacher		9		
16	Pin-Chen Huang	495498	Third Grade Classroom Teacher		4		
17	Mohan Shang	491584	Third Grade Classroom Teacher		< 1.5		
18	Wenyun Dong	502147	Fourth Grade Classroom Teacher		4		

# STAFFING

19	Ai-Ai Lin-Johnson	997154	Fourth Grade Classroom Teacher	<4	
20	Wenjuan Wang	478959	Fourth Grade Classroom Teacher	4	
21	Mengyao Chen	495688	Fourth Grade Classroom Teacher	2	
22	Lu Yang	997436	Fifth Grade Classroom Teacher	4	
23	Sirui Chen	996640	Fifth Grade Classroom Teacher	< 3	
24	Yanyan Sun	996177	Fifth Grade Classroom Teacher	1	
25	Kevin Balk	496742	Sixth Grade Classroom Teacher	2	
26	Dong-Ying Pai	996184	Seventh Grade Classroom Teacher	1	
27	Bo Liu	489843	Eighth Grade Classroom Teacher	5	
28	Pamella Stommes	490550	Eighth Grade Classroom Teacher	< 6	
29	Phillip Morris	459610	Reading Specialist Assessment Specialist	< 8	
30	Kate Aubrecht	471594	2/3 Grade English Teacher	1	
31	Maureen Shealer	415119	2/3 Grade English Teacher	1	x
32	Kristin Nordvold	403412	2/3 Grade English Teacher	< 2	
33	Ashly Friberg	486583	Fourth Grade English Teacher	2	x
34	Jennifer Podany	378175	Fifth/Sixth Grade English	1	x
35	Jackie Stiehl	365918	ELL Teacher	x < 2	x
36	Bradly Byykkonen	434391	6-8 Grade English Teacher	5	
37	Andrew Scheid	438750	Middle School Science Teacher	6	
38	Alan Sandau	439634	Middle School Science Teacher	2	
39	Britta Fitzer	482815	K-8 Music Teacher	1	
40	Hsin-Yin Min	490697	4-8 Grade Music and Orchestra Teacher	x 1	
41	Shu-Hua Lin	485621	K-8 Music Teacher	x 1	x
42	Lei Li	459280	K-8 Music Teacher	< 3	



# STAFFING

43	Meghan Byram	443870	K-8 Art Teacher		5	
44	Yu-Chia Chen	492611	K-8 Art Teacher	x	< 3	
45	Jenni Hoyt	351598	K-8 Art Teacher	x	< 3	
46	Sarah Totall	386400	Physical Education Teacher		4	
47	Erin Thune	383220	Physical Education Teacher		4	
48	Ross Hyde	405448	Physical Education Teacher	x	1	
49	Elaine Sadoff	426842	Special Education Teacher		2	
50	John Harrison	488853	Special Education Teacher		< 1	x
51	Pei-Ying Lo	498453	Special Education Teacher		< 1	
52	Meijie Goudy	456348	Speech and Language Pathologist	x	<4	
53	Taoyuan Li	377724	Speech and Language Pathologist		9	

## 2016-17 ADMINISTRATORS

	Name	File Folder No.	Assignment	Years Employed by the School	Left During 2016-17	Not Returning 2017-18
1	Susan Berg		CEO/Executive Director	5.5		
2	Luyi Lien		Academic Director	11		
3	Jeremy Brewer		Dean of Students	5		

## 2016-17 OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

	Name	File Folder No.	Assignment	Part-Time	Years Employed by the School	Left During 2016-17	Not Returning 2017-2018
1	Esther Tan Lee		Special Education Para		5		
2	Yuting Li		Special Education Para		2		x
3	Yu-Chi Huang Norby		Special Education Para		3		

# STAFFING

4	Yu-Chia Chen	Special Education Para	x	< 3	
5	Yi Sun	Special Education Para		1	
6	Sandy Pan	Educational Assistant		7	
7	Joyce Lu	Educational Assistant		9	
8	Pearl Chen	Educational Assistant		7	
9	Mary Zhang	Educational Assistant		7	
10	Tammy Tsao	Educational Assistant		5	
11	Cuijian Baker	Educational Assistant		4	
12	Siwen Xue	Educational Assistant		1	x
13	Hong Xiao	Educational Assistant		2	x
14	Yuning Zhang	Educational Assistant		< 1	
15	Fanhong Meng	Hanban Teacher		<1	
16	Xifeng Zhang	Hanban Teacher		<2	
17	Qin Wu	Hanban Teacher		< 2	x

## 2016-17 OTHER STAFF MEMBERS

	Name	File Folder No.	Assignment	Part Time	Years Employed by the School	Left During 2016-17	Not Returning 2017-18
1	Jennifer Olsen		Business/HR Manager		9		
2	Jennifer Liu		Registrar/Academic Coordinator		<3	x	
3	Suzanne Reider		Registrar		<1		
4	Abigail Pribbenow		Communications/ Development Manager		4		
5	Bill Francois		Facilities Manager		< 4		
6	Susan Reader		Executive Secretary/ Special Projects		2		
7	Paul Strand		Custodian		< 3		
8	Joel Nawrocki		Custodian		< 3	x	
9	Chemin Chu		IT Manager		8		
10	Kenny Chan		Special Education Coordinator		3		

# STAFFING

11	Emily Fowler	Receptionist		< 2
12	Shih-Yu Kuo	Assessment Specialist		5
13	Becky Kiekhafer	Attendance Assistant		< 3
14	Jenni Hoyt	Student Activities Coordinator	x	< 3
15	Larissa Zayets-Tukhlynovych	Assistant School Nurse		1
16	Wendi Harmsen	Health Aide	x	< 3
17	Ginger Hao	Licensed School Nurse	x	< 4
18	Joe Scartozzi	Recess Supervisor	x	< 1
19	Sydney Hopkins	Recess Supervisor	x	< 1
20	Andrew Shelendich	Recess Supervisor	x	< 1
21	Natsue Shelendich	Recess Supervisor	x	< 1
22	Helen Hindrawati	Food Service Coordinator		7
23	Beth Irish	Food Service Assistant	x	< 3
24	Dian Afriyanti	Food Service Assistant	x	5
25	Kaiyla Cooper	Food Service Assistant	x	< 2
26	Kim Hash	Food Service Assistant	x	< 2
27	Libby Pomroy	Extended Day Coordinator		5
28	Teresa Yen	Yinghua Care Staff	x	< 3
29	Emily Lear	Yinghua Care Staff	x	< 1
30	Ming-Chieh (Jasmine) Lu	Yinghua Care Staff	x	3
31	Jennifer Alvermann	Yinghua Care Staff	x	1
32	Quinn Lee	Yinghua Care Staff	x	< 2

# STAFFING

33	Fletcher Wolf	Yinghua Care Staff	x	< 1	
34	Austen Macalus	Yinghua Care Staff	x	< 1	x
35	Spencer Johnson	Yinghua Care Staff	x	< 1	x

For the 2016-17 school year, the student to teacher ratio (including instructional staff) was approximately 12:1.

The Yinghua Academy teaching staff is selected using a three-tiered process. The first step is an interview with the hiring committee. The second step is for the candidate to teach a sample lesson. The last step is a final interview with the administrative team to review the job description, policies, procedures, salary and benefits.

Yinghua teachers and educational staff are reviewed three times during the school year. Teachers also are asked to submit weekly lesson plans to the Academic Director for review and to collaborate on grade-level integrated curriculum theme maps. Teaching staff attend weekly lesson planning working-meetings with grade-level and subject-matter teams.

The table below gives the current retention rate for the school years 2016-17. 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

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
<b>Percentage of Teachers Retained from Prior School Year</b>	72%	50%	82%	60%	89%	93%	87%	94%

From the 2016-17 school year to the 2017-18 school year, teachers gave the following reasons for resignation and departure from Yinghua: taking a position at a district school closer to home, staying home with children, and pursuing other interests.

## Financial Performance

The financial success in fiscal year 2016-17 continues from prior years. The budget creation process is a mature, deliberate and methodical process that has been used for many years. The school takes a very conservative approach towards budget creation and implementation.

### BUDGET CREATION

The budget creation process starts in the winter of the prior year with the Executive Director, Business and H/R Manager, and the school's financial management services group, CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA), sitting down to develop the first draft of a proposed budget. The Executive Director and Business and HR Manager proactively solicit initial input from other administrators and teaching staff and prioritize the feedback for inclusion into the budget creation process. Consideration is given to both academic and operational needs. Additionally, CLA expertise is utilized to create the first draft of the budget taking into consideration enrollment and expense projections.

The budget then undergoes a thorough review and vetting through the Finance and Facilities Committee to develop any questions and concerns. Final input and agreement in direction is determined as the final changes are incorporated into the draft budget, and the final draft version is presented to the full board for review and approval based upon the recommendation of the Finance and Facilities Committee. The Board may provide last minute suggestions before the final budget is approved in the spring for the following fiscal year.

### IMPLEMENTATION

The Executive Director, together with the school's Business and HR Manager, implement the Board-approved budget for the year. School Administration relies upon the help of CliftonLarsonAllen to ensure that projected revenues are meeting budget expectations. The Executive Director uses prudent discretion to execute the budget but is also given authority to manage the various expenses within the budget parameters.

Yinghua Academy has many internal controls to manage the school's fund and cash operations in order to reduce the risk of inadvertent loss through human error or negligence. All expenses are authorized by the E.D., reviewed and approved by the Board Treasurer, and paid through the school's financial services company, CliftonLarsonAllen creating a separation of duties between the entities. The school maintains a close working relationship with CliftonLarsonAllen while executing the budget. The Treasurer and the Finance and Facilities Committee worked closely with the school administration and CliftonLarsonAllen to ensure a successful financial year.

# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

## MONITORING AND REPORTING

The school's financial documents are closely reviewed on a monthly basis through the Finance and Facilities Committee. Committee members review and inspect the financials and challenge items that may be inconsistent with the budget. The Board Treasurer provides a monthly update at each regularly scheduled board meeting providing full transparency to the Board, the staff and the community.

As required or if requested, Yinghua provides public copies of financial-related documents to any interested external entities on regular, periodic basis to fulfill regulatory and/or contractual obligations.

## FINANCIAL SUCCESSES IN THE 2016-17 SCHOOL YEAR

Yinghua's adherence to this process produced several financial successes for the school in 2016-17; some of which include:

- Received the State of Minnesota School Finance Award in 2017; received every year of eligibility (2008 - 2017).
- Obtained an unqualified audit for FY 2016. The 2016 audit contained no material weaknesses or deficiencies.
- Maintained a good credit relationship with Drake Bank and did not need to draw on a line of credit.
- Received donations from the Yinghua community totaling over \$173,000.
- Expect to officially finish FY 2017 with a \$589,000 surplus (8.3% of Fund 01 expenses), exceeding the original budget surplus of \$190,438.

Continuing on the financial success from recent years, Yinghua Academy benefitted from another financially strong year. The school continues to benefit from the full-day funding for kindergartners which was enacted through state legislative changes. Furthermore, strong student retention continues to maintain the growth of the student body. Yinghua has capitalized on its growth years by increasing the fund balance to exceed its policy goal. The growth years for a school are a window of opportunity to grow the fund balance before the school reaches full enrollment at which point the fund balance will grow at a slower rate. Conservative budget creation and responsible execution meant that the general fund balance experienced a surplus of \$589,739 and the school's combined general fund balance moved to 35% (unaudited).

# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

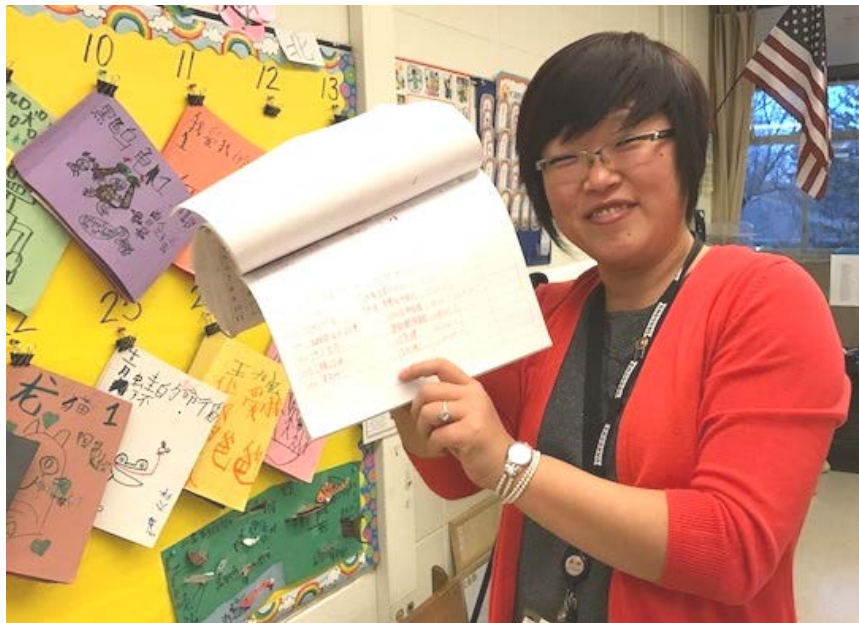
Fiscal Year 2016-17's surplus balance ended \$398,801 higher than the original budget passed by the Board in the spring of 2016. As stated earlier, this original budget was created from a very conservative approach. The fiscal year-end general fund balance is \$2,573,206 (unaudited), which equates to a 30% general fund (Fund 01) balance. These percentages are reflected in the table below.

## GENERAL FUND BALANCE (FUND 01) HISTORY

2011-12 Audited	2012-13 Audited	2013-14 Audited	2015-16 Audited	2016-17 Unaudited	2017-18* Projected
4.4%	9.4%	13.0%	22.4%	30.3%	34.3%

\*Fiscal year 2018 projection taken from 5-year budget model created in 2013.

The following is a summary of Yinghua Academy's balance sheet as well as the school's original budget and actual financial results for Fiscal Year 2017. The Yinghua Academy School Board approved the original budget in the spring of 2016 and approved the last revised budget on May 15, 2017.



A second grade teacher shows the class check-out log. All her students write and illustrate Chinese books for a class lending library.

# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

## BALANCE SHEET AS OF JUNE 30, 2017 (UNAUDITED)

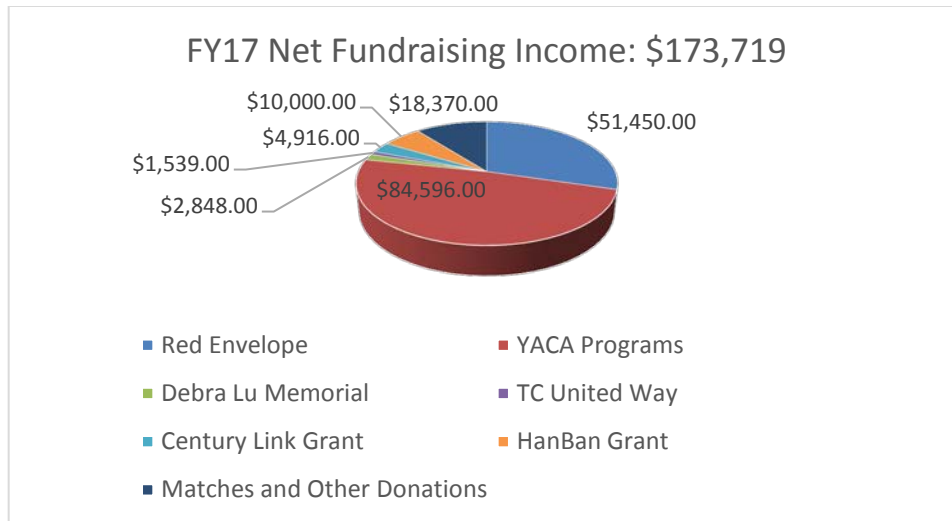
<b>Assets</b>	
Cash	2,149,369
Accounts Receivable	3,086
State Aid Receivable	979,361
Federal Aid Receivable	14,785
Prepaid Expenses and Deposits	155,910
Prior Year State Receivables	(7,030)
Due from Other Funds	142,849
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>3,438,330</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
Salaries and Wages Payable	300,724
Line of Credit	0
Accounts Payable	117,871
Payroll Deductions and Benefits Payable	65,909
Unearned Revenue	33,381
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>518,385</b>
<b>Fund Balance</b>	<b>2,919,946</b>



# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES		
DESCRIPTION	REVISED BUDGET	ACTUAL BUDGET (UNAUDITED)
<b>Revenues</b>		
State Revenues	7,104,693	6,955,536
Federal Revenues	117,394	179,724
Other Revenues	286,608	291,078
Donations and Gifts	173,719	80,000
Food Service	261,704	242,649
Community Service (Yinghua Care)	629,117	604,680
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>8,573,295</b>	<b>8,353,667</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>		
Salaries and Benefits	4,325,715	4,406,001
Building Lease and Operating Expenses	1,398,239	1,413,022
Programming, General & Administrative	1,368,721	1,496,877
Food Service	252,767	242,649
Community Service (Yinghua Care)	563,975	554,680
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>7,909,417</b>	<b>8,113,229</b>
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>663,878</b>	<b>240,438</b>
<b>Fund Balance</b>		
Beginning Fund Balance	2,256,068	2,256,068
Add Surplus (Deficit)	663,878	240,438
<b>Ending Fund Balance</b>	<b>2,919,946</b>	<b>2,496,506</b>
<b>Combined Fund Balances Percentage</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>31%</b>

# FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE



Individual contributions, matching gifts and grants continue to be important revenue sources for Yinghua Academy. Yinghua exceeded its campaign fundraising goals on its three main fundraising campaigns this year. The largest portion fundraising income, as illustrated in the pie chart, comes to the school through Yinghua Academy Community Association (YACA), the school's parent association, which raised more than \$84,000 through online giving and a Read-A-Thon. The annual Red Envelope letter campaign brought in more than \$50,000. Funds raised (except Dr. Debra Hua Lu Memorial gifts) were used to support the general operating expenses of the school, to pay for teacher immigration visa applications, for facilities and technology expenses, and for teacher appreciation, among other things. Gifts in memory of Yinghua grandparent Dr. Debra Hua Lu were designated to support the school library.

## Curriculum

Yinghua’s K-8 academic curriculum follows Minnesota State Standards, Common Core standards, national standards for foreign language education and 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.

Academic Director Luyi Lien leads all curriculum development and ensures that content delivered in Mandarin covers the Core Knowledge Sequence and Minnesota Standards in addition to building Mandarin fluency. Dr. Lien works with University of Minnesota immersion scholars from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Center for Applied Linguistics and Confucius Institute as well as national immersion scholars at Asia Society, the National Foreign Language Center and other leading institutions to continually evolve the program and develop curriculum incorporating the latest research.

A full immersion school, Yinghua follows the best practices and research recommendations for immersion education. Our goal is to support the highest possible level of language acquisition. One of the ways we do this is by creating and sustaining teaching and learning environments that are steeped in Chinese language and rich in Chinese culture. Material taught in Chinese is not translated into English. Students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in a Chinese language environment and grasp meaning as teachers deliver content in Chinese. Students in kindergarten through fourth grade receive all core subject instruction in Chinese. To prepare for success in area high schools, middle school students shift to a fifty-fifty model—half of a middle school student’s instruction is in Chinese and half in English.

## YINGHUA IMMERSION CURRICULUM AT A GLANCE

Grade Level	Curricular Highlights	% of Day Using Chinese
K and 1 <sup>st</sup> grade	All core subjects taught in Chinese	90%
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	Students begin formal English language instruction 7 periods/week	76%
3 <sup>rd</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup> grade	Students have 5 periods of English per week	80%
5 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> grade	Core and Honors Chinese and Math classes are offered; English is taught 5 periods per week	50%

The school has implemented Professional Learning Communities for all instructional staff and trains staff in Differentiated Instruction to meet every student’s needs and to 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, student portfolios, 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. Following are descriptions of the components of Yinghua’s curriculum.

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

Kindergarten (full-day) and first grade students work 90% of their academic day in Mandarin, with the exception of specialists (i.e., 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. 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 an area 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

# CURRICULUM

University of Minnesota’s 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 in all grades in a variety of forms to support students’ language and cultural understanding. In middle school, Chinese Language Arts teachers systematically introduce classical Chinese literature to widen the scope of students’ Chinese language knowledge and advance their cultural 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 two levels per grade. Each level is at or above grade level with differences in pacing. Core Math begins with pre-algebra in fifth grade, and, when students graduate, they are prepared for high school geometry or algebra I. Honors Math students complete algebra II and graduate from Yinghua prepared for high school advanced algebra II or pre-calculus.

# CURRICULUM

## YINGHUA MIDDLE SCHOOL MATH CURRICULUM

Math Group	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Ready for Grade 9
Core	Intro to Pre-Algebra	Intro to Algebra I	Algebra I	Intro to Geometry I	Algebra I or Geometry
Honors	Pre-Algebra	Algebra I	Algebra I Geometry	Geometry Algebra II	Algebra II or 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*, *Beowulf*, 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

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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 Social Studies, Yinghua focuses on teaching students how to view historical events using critical thinking skills and how to ask questions and obtain evidence that educates people about the value of these events. Students learn about citizenship, government, economics, geography and history.

In kindergarten through fourth grade, social studies is taught in the Chinese immersion classroom where teachers address Core Knowledge topics such as the Thirteen Colonies, U.S. presidential biographies, land formations and geographical terms, European history, and the Inuit and Anasazi cultures, as well as Chinese history and geography topics such as the Qin Dynasty and Emperor Qin Shi Huang; the Han, Tang and Song Dynasties; and the Great Wall and Chinese inventions.

Fifth through eighth graders' social studies courses are taught half in Chinese and half in English depending on the topic. Subjects include Chinese history, from mythology and the pre-Qin period to modern and contemporary periods; the great philosophers of Ancient China; Chinese art history; Ancient Greece and Rome; the European Renaissance and Reformation; the American Revolution; the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights; the U.S.-Dakota War from each side's perspective; U.S. immigration; the Great Depression; the Sino-Japanese War; World War II and the Holocaust; global citizenship; the impact of human beings on the environment; and current local, national and world affairs.

## SPECIAL CLASSES

Yinghua recognizes the connections between overall academic achievement and student exposure to specialty subjects such as art, music and physical education, and we maximize 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 delivered either in Mandarin or in English. During the lower school years, students read, write, analyze, describe and move to music. They are introduced to different types of music, music theory, singing and playing instruments. Kindergarteners have 60 minutes per week of music; grades one through eight each have two 50-minute periods per week. In third grade students learn to play recorder. Every fourth grader makes a music instruction choice—they may choose a string

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instrument (violin, viola, cello or bass) and receive instruction during music class, or they may participate in a choir where professional singing techniques are taught. After fourth grade, students who elect to continue in orchestra meet twice a week for practice before school and during recess; Yinghua has two orchestral groups led by orchestra teacher Hsin-Yin Min. A Conservatory of Music offers after school lessons to more than 100 students in Western instruments such as violin and piano as well as Chinese instruments such as erhu, a bowed string instrument, and pipa, a Chinese lute.

## 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 acquire in other classes. Kindergarteners have 30 minutes per week of art while students in grades one through eight each have 50 minutes per week.

## 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 have school-issued iPads. Assignments in science, English and social studies may be issued via iPad and texts often are provided via this medium. At all ages, Chinese teachers use web-based tools such as IQChinese, 5QChannel and VoiceThread. Video-conferencing helps develop Chinese conversational skills between Yinghua students and sister school peers in China.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

On any given afternoon during the past school year at Yinghua, as many as 182 students participated in extracurricular activities. Yinghua offers a wide range of fee-based after school programming including sports, music lessons and clubs. Students enrolled in the basic after school program, from 3:30 to 6



p.m. on school days, may go to Homework First, playground, game room, arts and crafts area, library or computer lab. Students can also register for special after school Enrichment classes such as nature crafts, computer coding, chess or sports. Some after school instructors are Yinghua teachers and staff, while others are community members or teachers from outside organizations. Morning Care is also available from 6:45 to 7:45 a.m. on school days.

Under the direction of Ms. Hsin-Yin Min, Yinghua's after school Conservatory of Music offers 30-minute private music lessons taught once per week by professional musicians with extensive performance experience. Ms. Min is Yinghua's orchestra teacher and also performs with Meadowlark Quartet and the Southwest Minnesota Orchestra. Instruments offered include viola, piano, erhu (a Chinese bowed string instrument), percussion, guitar, ukulele, double bass, cello and pipa (a Chinese lute). Conservatory students perform at a year-end recital. During the third term of the 2016-17 school year, 140 students participated in weekly after school private music lessons at Yinghua.

In Athletics, Yinghua offers in-house sports for students in grades K through 4 and traveling teams for students in grades 5 through 8. Younger students may select from soccer, floor hockey, basketball, track and field and a sports sampler. Yinghua participates in a similar-sized schools conference and offers older students to opportunity to compete in soccer, volleyball, basketball, cross country running, cross country ski, track and field and badminton.

## 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 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 2016-17 school year:

- Statewide MCA-III for grades 3-8 in math and reading; grades 5 and 8 in science.
- Star Reading assessments for grades 2-8 providing internal data on students' English reading skills. We elected to administer the Star Reading assessments; that is, they were not part of our contract goals.
- NWEA for grades 1-8.
- SOPA (Student Oral Proficiency Assessment) for grades K, 2, and 4.
- OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview) for grades 6 and 8.

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- Youth Chinese Test (YCT) Assessment of student Chinese reading comprehension and writing, grades 4-8.
- Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK) for grades 7 and 8.

The MCA, NWEA, SOPA, OPI, and YCT data, along with historical SOPA and YCT results, are organized according to the requirements of Yinghua’s charter contract with Friends of Education on the following pages. The HSK test results are also included.



Orchestra teacher Hsin-Yin Min congratulates students on recital day.

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## 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. Yinghua Academy was designated a REWARD school for the past three years. REWARD schools are Minnesota's highest performing Title I schools. According to the Minnesota Department of Education, REWARD schools have demonstrated exceptional student outcomes and success in closing the achievement gap.

Our charter contract with Friends of Education designates three comparison districts—Minneapolis, St. Anthony/New Brighton and Minnetonka. Our school's MCA proficiency rates out-performed these three school districts in Math for grades 3 to 8; Reading for grade 7; and Science for grade 5. Despite our high proficiency rate in reading and math, our students still show significant growth. Specifically, 33.8% of students in reading and 37.7% 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 need added attention are special education students and students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Using Title I funds, we have provided 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). On the Youth Chinese Test (YCT), the majority of 4th-8th grade students passed the highest level (Level 4) with 78.8% of students passing Level 4 by 5th grade. Yinghua began using Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) assessments in 2015 to assess students' Mandarin oral proficiency. We are reassessing our pre-set language proficiency goals and investigating whether our instructional strategies need improvement in order for us to reach them. According to this measure, our students performed one level lower than our predicted results. This year, the results have improved, with 20% of 6th grade students meeting our goals (compared to the previous year's 7.3%); 41.6% of 8th Grade students reached the advanced level, which was a large improvement over last year. Last year we had two students meet an advanced proficiency level.

Internally, in order to promote Chinese language, reading and literacy, we instituted a Chinese dictionary contest for grades 3 to 4 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

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ideas to the public. The results were promising in that students gained confidence in using tools to enhance their Mandarin learning.

In 2017, the Confucius Institute launched an Inaugural Minnesota Chinese Speech Contest on April 22. Immersion students from grades 1 to 12 were invited to compete. Yinghua sent 24 students to the competition and won six gold medals, ten silver medals and eight bronze medals. In addition, Yinghua graduates took first and third places at the high school level, and were sent to compete in the Midwest Regional Chinese Bridge Speech contest in Valparaiso, Indiana, on May 13, 2017.

To recognize and celebrate high levels of Chinese proficiency, the Confucius Institute at the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Education host an annual Chinese Proficiency Award Ceremony at Ted Mann Concert Hall. In 2017, 66 Yinghua students were eligible to receive MDE Proficiency Certificates recognizing their successful performance on the Youth Chinese Test (YCT), Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK) Chinese proficiency test, Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) and STAMP Proficiency Assessment.

Academic achievements of a more qualitative nature include the following: 7th and 8th grade student leaders involved in Yinghua's Student Life Organization attended the third-ever Minnesota WE Day along with 18,000 youth to celebrate the power of American youth to create positive and lasting change locally and globally. In both of the summers surrounding the 2016-17 school year, Middle School students, along with Academic Director Dr. Luyi Lien and Executive Director Mrs. Sue Berg completed study-tours in Taiwan (2016) and China (2017). At the end of the school year, every student participated in Academic Performances designed to showcase their spoken and written English and Chinese language skills as well as their creativity and critical thinking.

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## CHARTER CONTRACT GOAL 1: STATE ASSESSMENTS (40% WEIGHT)

### Sub Goal 1.1: Absolute Proficiency

By the conclusion of FY 2017, the school-wide proficiency rate will be no less than 89% for math. Reading proficiency will be 75% for grades 3 through 5 (consolidated) and 87% for grades 6 through 8 (consolidated) to reflect the research-based increase in native language acquisition over time in immersion programs.

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA)	Goal by FY 2017	2014-2015	2015-16	2016-2017
Math G3-8	89%	84.4%	86.6%	88.9%
Reading G3-5	75%	83.1%	76.9%	72.6%
Reading G6-8	87%	83.0%	80.1%	81.3%

*Results:* The school did not meet these goals. Absolute proficiency scores in math were lower than the goal by 0.1%.

75.3% of Yinghua students achieved high or medium growth status in math. 83.2% of students achieved high or medium growth status in reading.

### 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 through 8 in math, of grades 5 and 8 in science, and of grades 6 through 8 in reading (to reflect the research-based increase in native language acquisition over time in immersion programs).

2017 MCA	Yinghua	Minneapolis	St. Anthony/ New Brighton	Minnetonka	Combined Average
Math G3-8	88.9%	43.8%	75.4%	80.4%	> 77.9%
Reading G6-8	81.3%	44.1%	68.4%	83.6%	> 76.0%
Science G5 & G8	78.5%	35.0%	56.1%	76.1%	> 66.1%

*Results:* The school met this goal. We have outperformed our comparison schools in math and science, and in Reading, our score is higher than the combined average of our three comparison schools.

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## 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	2016-17
Z-Score	> 0	*
# Non-proficient student (>20)	Yes/No	See below
High Growth % of above in subsequent year	> 50%	See below

2017 Math (332 students measured)		
# Non-proficient student (>20)	Yes	42
High Growth % of above in subsequent year	> 50%	7 students 16.7%

2017 Reading (334 students measured)		
# Non-proficient student (>20)	Yes	72
High Growth % of above in subsequent year	> 50%	23 students 31.9%

*Results:* \*The school's 2016-17 growth z-score, necessary for calculating the first part of Sub Goal 1.3, was not published with the state's release of MMR data. Therefore, in this report, the school did not evaluate whether its z-score is greater than 0. For the second part of Sub Goal 1.3, the school did not meet the goal of the subsequent year's high growth scores for non-proficient students: 16.7% in Math and 31.9% in Reading.

As part of Minnesota's transition to the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the "School Performance" and Federal Accountability" reports were removed on July 27, 2017, as they reported information that is no longer applicable under ESSA. This means that Multiple Measurements Rating (MMR) and

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) data are no longer found on in the same place. New reports based on ESSA's accountability and school support requirements will be released for the 2018-19 school year.

## Sub Goal 1.4: Achievement Gap Reduction

By the conclusion of FY 2017, 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.

	2013*		2014		2015		2016		2017		2017 Goal <sup>†</sup>	
	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math
Asian	73.7 N=133	87.2 N=133	75.8 N=141	85.3 N=141	81.7 N=145	82.5 N=145	79.7 N=172	83.0 N=171	75.3 N=186	87.1 N=186	86.9	93.6
Black/ African American					70.0 N=10	80.0 N=10	65.0 N=20	90.0 N=20	66.7 N=24	83.3 N=24	85.0 <sup>§</sup>	90 <sup>§</sup>
White	75.0 N=84	91.7 N=84	85.4 N=89	94.3 N=88	83.8 N=143	85.9 N=143	79.5 N=176	92.0 N=176	78.1 N=215	92.1 N=214	87.5	95.9
Special Ed.	34.5 N=28	65.5 N=29	51.7 N=25	58.6 N=28	51.4 N=35	51.4 N=35	31.0 N=29	48.3 N=29	34.5 N=29	55.2 N=29	67.3	82.8
FRP <sup>‡</sup>	59.1 N=22	77.3 N=22	58.6 N=29	69.0 N=29	70.7 N=41	65.9 N=41	47.8 N=46	73.9 N=46	61.4 N=44	81.8 N=44	79.6	88.7

\*2013 data is not currently used on the MDE Report Card; these figures are based on previous data.

<sup>‡</sup>FRP data is not currently used on the MDE Report Card; these figures are based on previous data.

<sup>†</sup>The goals were calculated using the following formula:  $[(\text{one-half of } (100 - 2013 \text{ subgroup proficiency rate})) + 2013 \text{ subgroup proficiency rate}]$ .

<sup>§</sup>The Black/African American subgroup figures were calculated using data from 2015, the most recent year for which data is available.

*Results:* The school did not meet the first part of Sub Goal 1.4. See the next charts and text for the results of the second part of this goal.

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<b>2017</b>	<b>Non - FRL (N=396)</b>	<b>FRL (N=44)</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Math</b>	89.6%	81.8%	<b>7.8%</b>
<b>Reading</b>	77.3%	61.4%	<b>15.9%</b>

<b>2016</b>	<b>Non - FRL (N=335)</b>	<b>FRL (N=46)</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Math</b>	88.3%	73.9%	<b>14.4%</b>
<b>Reading</b>	82.1%	47.8%	<b>34.3%</b>

<b>2015</b>	<b>Non - FRL (N=267)</b>	<b>FRL (N=41)</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Math</b>	87.2%	65.9%	<b>21.3%</b>
<b>Reading</b>	85%	70.7%	<b>14.3%</b>

*Results:* The school did meet the second part of the goal. By the conclusion of FY 2017, for both reading and math, the difference between the non-FRL proficiency rate in the school and the FRL proficiency rate was reduced in both reading and math as documented in the following data.



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

Chinese language acquisitions are based on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) Proficiency Guidelines 2012.

### Sub Goal 2.1: Speaking and Listening (Assessed through SOPA)

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. Our goal is for 80% of immersion students to reach proficiency levels appropriate to their ages and number of years in the immersion program.

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 for students to demonstrate their highest level of oral fluency, grammar, vocabulary and listening comprehension. Designed for children who are learning a foreign language in a school setting, these instruments 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
2. Junior Novice – Mid
3. Junior Novice – High
  
4. Junior Intermediate – Low
5. Junior Intermediate – Mid
6. Junior Intermediate – High
  
7. Junior Advanced – Low
8. Junior Advanced – Mid
9. Junior Advanced – High

Yinghua 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 progress of Yinghua's first cohort of 8th graders is outlined in the table below.

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## HISTORICAL SOPA FLUENCY LEVELS

Grade	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
K	2.58	2.50	3.16	3.21	3.34	3.33	3.55	3.48	3.61
1	2.98	3.74	-	-	-				
2	4.33	4.94	5.49	-	-	3.29	4.46	4.06	4.22
3	6.14	5.42	-	-	-				
4	1.99	4.81	-	6.45		-	6.61	5.06	5.64
5	3.33	2.64	5.99	7.32	-	6.01			
6	-	4.85	3.93	8.00	7.45	6.05	OPI	OPI	OPI
7	-	-	4.76	4.60	7.65	6.93			
8	-	-	-	4.78	5.35	7.11	OPI	OPI	OPI

## RECENT SOPA FLUENCY LEVELS

Grade	SOPA Scale Junior	Goal	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
K	Novice-High	80.0%	90.2%	88.3%	90.3%
2	Intermediate-Low	80.0%	82.0%	62.3%	81.5%
4	Intermediate-Mid	80.0%	100.0%	67.4%	92.7%

*Results:* The school met this goal as measured by the SOPA assessment.

### Sub Goal 2.1: Speaking and Listening (Assessed through OPI)

Each year, the school will administer an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) in grades 6 and 8. The goal is for 80% of immersion students to reach the following proficiency levels:

Grade	OPI Level	Goal	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
6	Advanced-Low	80%	5.9%	7.3%	20%
8	Advanced-Mid	80%	5.9%	4.0%	8.3%

*Results:* The school did not meet this goal as measured by the OPI assessment.

### Assessment of Yinghua Students' OPI Performance

Language proficiency refers to a person's ability to use a language for a variety of purposes, including speaking, listening, reading and writing. Proficiency is commonly measured using guidelines developed by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages which measure proficiency on a ten-level scale: Novice Low, Mid, and High; Intermediate Low, Mid, and High; Advanced Low, Mid, and High; and Superior.

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Among language experts, the OPI is viewed as an ideal tool to assess students' oral proficiency. Yinghua began using this assessment three years ago to evaluate how our older students use language in real life situations. In administering the tests, Yinghua followed the Language Testing International (LTI) Protocol for OPI assessment which is a 25-30 minute conversation conducted over the phone between the candidate and an ACTFL-trained and certified examiner.

Yinghua's OPI expectations and goals were higher than those of peer schools, but we felt that stretch goals would help with planning and teaching. We used our elementary school rate of progress to predict middle school results, and we set goals based on the elementary school track record of continuing to increase by one proficiency level per grade. However, students in Yinghua's grades 6 and 8 have fewer contact minutes with academic subjects taught in Chinese language than they had in younger grades and few opportunities to use Chinese in social settings. The OPI goals we set were not a realistic prediction for our middle school setting which switches to a half-Chinese/half-English model in grade 5. The Middle School decrease in Chinese language contact time in social and academic Chinese made it a challenge to continue to advance our students' language skills at a steady rate.

The OPI data below shows that last year 85.5% of grade 6 students reached a level at or above intermediate-medium. This year 88.4% of grade 6 students were able to reach intermediate-medium and above. Last year, only 40% of grade 8 students reached intermediate-high or higher results. This year, 83.3% of grade 8 students reached intermediate-high or higher results; this is an increase of 43.3% from 2015-16 to 2016-17 in grade 8 students' levels of intermediate-high or higher.

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## ORAL PROFICIENCY INTERVIEW ASSESSMENTS, YINGHUA GRADES 6 AND 8, 2014-2017

OPI Level	Grade 6			Grade 8		
	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Advanced Mid	0 (0/51)	7.3% (4/55)	3.3% (2/60)	5.9% (1/17)	4.0% (1/25)	8.3% (4/48)
Advanced Low	5.9% (3/51)	0	16.7% (10/60)	23.5% (4/17)	4.0% (1/25)	33.3% (16/48)
Intermediate High	19.6% (10/51)	12.7% (7/55)	41.7% (25/60)	52.9% (9/17)	32.0% (8/25)	41.7% (20/48)
Intermediate Medium	37.3% (19/51)	65.5% (36/55)	26.7% (16/60)	11.8% (2/17)	44.0% (11/25)	14.6% (7/48)
Intermediate Low	33.3% (17/51)	5.5% (3/55)	3.3% (2/60)	5.9% (1/17)	8.0% (2/25)	2.1% (1/48)
Novice High	2.0% (1/51)	1.8% (1/55)	0	0	0	0
No Test	2.0% (1/51)	7.3% (4/55)	8.3% (5/60)	0	8.0% (2/25)	0

With this data, we were able to study some students' progress between grade 6 and 8. The data above show that 62.8% of the 2014-2015 grade 6 students reached or surpassed the intermediate-medium level. Two years later, during the 2016-2017 school year, when they were in eighth grade, 83.3% of them reached or surpassed the intermediate-high, and 41.6% reached advanced-low or advanced-mid level. This chart shows students making continuous progress over the two years. And, in the table below we see that the vast majority of the grade 8 students, 87.5% of them, were able to increase by at least one proficiency level every two years. This data is important; however, it is still too soon to draw a conclusion or to suggest a set of revised goals. We need at least one more year's test results, and a larger sample of student assessment work to establish our hypothesis to decide how fast the students will be able to progress throughout their years in middle school.

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## YINGHUA OPI IMPROVEMENT BY OPI LEVEL

OPI Level	2014-2015 (Grade 6)	2016-2017 (Grade 8)
Advanced Mid	0	8.3% (4/48)
Advanced Low	5.9% (3/51)	33.3% (16/48)
Intermediate High	19.6% (10/51)	41.7% (20/48)
Intermediate Medium	37.3% (19/51)	14.6% (7/48)
Intermediate Low	33.3% (17/51)	2.1% (1/48)
Novice High	2.0% (1/51)	0
No Test	2.0% (1/51)	0

## YINGHUA OPI IMPROVEMENT BY NUMBER OF LEVELS IMPROVED

Levels Improved	2016-17 Grade 8 Student Count	%
0	5	10.40%
1	20	41.70%
2	17	35.40%
3	5	10.40%
No data to compare	1	2.10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### Sub Goal 2.2: Reading and Writing (Assessed through YCT)

Each year, the school will administer the Youth Chinese Test (YCT) in 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.

The Youth Chinese Test (YCT) is a standardized test developed by Hanban, the government office in the People's Republic of China charged with oversight of formal study of the Chinese language. YCT assesses student listening comprehension and reading in Chinese, and at Level IV it also assesses

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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.

## LEVELS OF THE YOUTH CHINESE TEST (YCT)

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

## YINGHUA YCT RESULTS, 2014-17

YCT	Goal	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
% of 5 <sup>th</sup> grade that passed Level IV	80%	87.1% (54/62)	88.7% (55/62)	78.8% (67/85)

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

This year's YCT data indicates we were 1.2% under the target goal. We believe the unexpected change from a paper and pencil format to a digital format is the reason our students' scores were lower than we had hoped. Last year, for the first time, all YCT tests were computerized and paper and pencil answers were not permitted. In addition, the system that YCT selected for representing Chinese characters through the use of a computer keyboard was different from the system our students have learned. Our students did not have sufficient computer writing practice to prepare for the digital presentation of the exam, and Yinghua students were unprepared to use the YCT typing system. In the coming year, we will prioritize using a computer to practice for the YCT test and we will work with students on their use of Pinyin, the alphabetic representation of characters, so that their typing accuracy can be increased.

## 2011-17 YINGHUA YCT RESULTS HISTORY

	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016		2016-2017	
# of Students Taking Test	227	93	87	91	3	115	3	124
Level Administered	I, II, III, IV	III, IV	IV	IV	III	IV	III	IV
Grades Included	2 <sup>nd</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> only	4 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup> only	4 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup>
# of Students Passing	219	82	59	59	3	85	3	53
Passing Rate	96.5%	88.2%	67.8%	64.8%	100.0%	73.9%	100.0%	42.7%

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## Sub Goal 2.2: Reading and Writing (Assessed through HSK)

Though it was not a formal goal to assess our students through HSK, this year we encouraged twelve grade 8 students who had already passed HSK level IV to take the level V test, which is significantly more advanced than the prior level.

The Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK), translated as Chinese Proficiency Test or Chinese Standard Exam, is China's standardized test of Chinese language proficiency for non-native speakers such as foreign students and overseas Chinese. The test is administered by Hanban, an agency of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. The HSK is a general (or universal) Chinese language abilities test for adult learners. After completing the YCT level IV test—the highest level—in grade 4 or 5, Yinghua students do not have another youth assessment option. Although HSK is designed for high school through adult learners, we decided to use this assessment tool to measure the Chinese abilities of students in grades 7 and 8.

In 2016-17, 87 students in grades 7 and 8 took the HSK tests, and 79 of them passed. For HSK level II, a passing score is a total of 120 points for the sum of listening and reading skills. For HSK levels III, IV, and V, a passing score is 180, the sum of listening, reading, and writing. Our students averaged 237.3 for level III, 225.8 for level IV, and 195.3 for level V. The results show that our students were not only able to pass the HSK, but also passed it with a very high level of confidence.

### 2016-17 HSK RESULTS

Test Location		HSK III	HSK IV	HSK V
Yinghua, USA	<b>Students</b>	24	51	12
	<b>Passing</b>	23	48	8
	<b>Average Score</b>	237.3	255.8	195.3
	<b>Passing Rate</b>	95.83%	94.12%	66.67%

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## CHARTER CONTRACT 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.

2016-17 NWEA	# of students
Reading: 4 <sup>th</sup> grade with percentile ranking of less than 70%	41
Math: 4 <sup>th</sup> grade with percentile ranking of less than 70%	25

2016-17 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	20	50%	15 (75%)
Math	16	50%	10 (62.5%)

*Results:* The school met this goal.

## CHARTER CONTRACT 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, in collaboration with the Executive Director and Academic Director, the School Board identifies overarching annual goals which tie back to the long-term strategic plan. The Academic Committee then proposes board-specific and administrative-specific objectives to meet those goals.

In 2016-2017, the Academic Committee served as a strategic planning working group to develop and critically evaluate the school's academic performance and improvement. Initiatives I, II and III of the resulting strategic plan focus on academics and were thoroughly reviewed by the Academic Committee.

On behalf of the Academic Committee, Dr. Lien delivered academic reports to the School Board on the following dates:



# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- 8/15/16: Strategic Plan Committee Report
- 11/21/16: Academic Status Update (Mrs. Sue Berg reported on behalf of Dr. Lien)
- 3/27/17: Academic Status Report 2

## **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 K-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 of Education 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 of Education 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. In Term I, the DDI team met on December 6, 2016. In Term II, the DDI team met on March 29, 2017. Friends of Education was invited to attend both meetings. DDI meetings with teachers were held to focus on class results and action plans; these meetings took place November 30-December 9, 2016; March 20-April 7, 2017; and June 10-12, 2017.

Every year, Yinghua students participate in Academic Performances at the end of May to share what they've learned with their parents. Last year, Lower School (K-4<sup>th</sup>) students performed on May 25, 2017, and Middle School students (5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>) performed on May 26, 2017. These alternative assessments function as an effective way to assess student language proficiency as well as their understanding of subject content and culture.

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## CHARTER CONTRACT 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
2016-17	95%	96.9%

*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
2016-17	95%	Fall 95% Spring 96%

*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
2016-17	100%	100%

*Result:* The school met this goal.

# ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

## 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
2016-17	95%	100%

*Result:* The school met this goal.



2017 was the first year that Yinghua graduated two classes of 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Graduates, wearing Dragons scarves, listened to student reflections on the Yinghua experience.

## Operational Performance

Yinghua has upheld all expectations as outlined in its charter contract and continued to put processes in place to ensure this high level of performance continues beyond the individuals on the board and in administration at this time. The board also approved a new strategic plan covering the years 2017 through 2020. The plan includes action items for the School Board and administrators to ensure continuous improvement.

### AUTHORIZER RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

Yinghua Academy's charter authorizer is Friends of Education (Friends). The charter authorizer provides strict financial and academic controls and ensures school adherence to national standards for charter school oversight and quality. Friends of Education monitors the three critical areas of charter school operations: academic performance, finance and reporting, and legal compliance, by monitoring student testing, conducting site visits, reviewing annual reports and communicating with MDE. Friends may be contacted at: R.E. Topoluk, Executive Director, [Friends of Education](#), 200 East Lake Street, Wayzata, MN 55391, (952) 745-2717, [topoluk@tcfbank.com](mailto:topoluk@tcfbank.com).

A new contract with Friends of Education became effective July 1, 2014 for a five-year period, the longest term allowed by Minnesota Charter School law. In the letter to the school awarding the five-year contract renewal, Friends of Education Executive Director Beth Topoluk wrote "(we applaud) Yinghua Academy for its superior academic performance, having achieved 90% of its academic goals; consistent lack of material or significant deficiencies in its external audits; timely compliance reporting which has evolved into a model of reporting compliance; and its transparency in disclosing matters to Friends of Education –the transparency Yinghua has displayed establishes confidence in its leadership team, both board and administration."

In 2015, the Minnesota Department of Education conducted a five-year performance evaluation of Friends of Education as required by statute, using the Minnesota Authorizer Performance Evaluation System (MAPES). Friends of Education received an exemplary rating.

### COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAWS AND MDE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Yinghua Academy complies with all applicable laws, with the School Board at times seeking legal counsel to ensure compliance. In its letter summarizing the awarding of a five-year charter contract renewal, Friends of Education stated that Yinghua "has timely compliance reporting which has evolved into a model of reporting compliance." Since 2014, the School Board has maintained a pattern of substantive policy review and maintained overall compliance with legal requirements in drafting and

# OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

reviewing policies and procedures. Processes implemented by the board, administrators and staff ensured overall timeliness regarding compliance with applicable laws and MDE reporting requirements.

Yinghua Academy strives to be completely compliant with MDE reporting and regulations, including submitting reports such as the Annual Report, Q-Comp, DIRS reporting and MARSS data. Yinghua school representatives attended required MDE training. In addition, one hundred percent of Yinghua Academy teachers had permission to teach from the State Board of Teaching.

Yinghua Academy followed state and local health and safety requirements and is compliant with fire code, inspections, and other safety requirements; emergency drills have been conducted. With additional experience and a concerted effort to connect with MDE, administrators and the school board have improved knowledge of all reporting systems and requirements.

## STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

During the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years, Yinghua Academy completed the school's second strategic planning process, a thorough year of reflection, research and planning involving more than 100 stakeholders. With guidance from consultant Anne Sturdivant, CEO of Latitudes Group, community members addressed these questions: What are we best at and passionate about; where does our vitality come from; and what are our wishes?

Research groups formed including key stakeholders—teachers, staff, parents and board members—and in the summer a steering committee with representation from the same key groups analyzed reports and recommended Learning Group topics for research: 1. Equity and Diversity in Our Student Body; 2. Growth; 3. Following up with Graduates; 4. Sharing Our Expertise; 5. Educating for the Future; 6. Understanding our Competition; and 7. Middle School Chinese Language Arts.

Approximately 40 people from the Yinghua community joined Learning Groups to research topics and discern opportunities, insights and potential risks. At August and September leadership retreats the School Board reviewed findings and gave strategic shape to the emerging themes.

Learning Groups one and three, "Equity and Diversity in Our Student Body," and "Following up with Graduates," were moved from strategic to tactical status with the following Board recommendations: adopt an equity policy, mindful of the needs of all learners; actively work to attract a diverse applicant pool through advertising and promotion of Open Enrollment; continue to provide differentiated intervention for all learners, particularly those who struggle; continue to provide high school and

# OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE

college search assistance; collect information on graduates; and assist alumni in sustaining their Mandarin language skills. Five initiatives, described in a “Short Form,” emerged for strategic focus:

1. To increase Chinese proficiency;
2. To increase student engagement academically, socially, and emotionally;
3. To lead Chinese immersion education;
4. To manage growth; and
5. To align infrastructure with strategy.

In November 2016, the School Board approved a [Short Form of the Strategic Plan](#) summarizing the work of multiple learning groups and focused initiative task forces and is the result of much good thinking by dozens of parents, teachers, administrators and board members. It addresses how Yinghua plans to sustain and extend current excellence and strengthen the school while balancing scale, scope, and opportunities for innovation.



Art teacher Meghan Byram demonstrates shading. The art curriculum introduces students to art history, great artists and masterworks, and students have a chance to draw, paint and make objects.

## 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.

We know that these techniques contribute to the proficiency of our students' Chinese language abilities. 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 student 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 Chinese speech contests and the Dragon Boat Festival in St. Paul. The school's highly polished student performances for the Chinese New Year annual celebration have become a rich tradition.

International collaboration with students in Chinese-speaking countries enriches the lives of Yinghua's middle school students. Throughout the school year, they enjoy monthly teleconferencing with age mates from our sister school in China, the Number 8 Middle School in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia. The

# INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AND IMPLEMENTATION

pinnacle in immersion education has been an annual study abroad trip for students in grades 6 through 8 to a Chinese-speaking country. For fifteen days in June and July, these young people become true global citizens. No matter if the trip takes these world travelers to China or to Taiwan, highlights always include the opportunity to experience schools, stay with host families, eat local food, visit famous sites and meet native-speaking Chinese friends.

Since fall of 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, have been able to enroll 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 through Minnesota Online High School. A pre-AP Chinese Language course is among the online offerings.

Other innovative practices implemented during 2016-17 included:

- **Experiential learning** through artist residencies, field trips, and community service. Artist Wing Young Huie took pictures in a kindergarten classroom for a project he is working on called "Chinese-ness," and he met with 8<sup>th</sup> grade students for "Chalk Talks" exploring issues related to race and identity.
- **Promotion of reading** through the Read-A-Thon, iChinese Reader, Accelerated Reader and a new Friends of Education sponsored after-school activity called Battle of the Books for students in grades 3 through 5. Yinghua took first place in the First Annual Friends of Education Battle of the Books hosted by DaVinci Academy. Two Little Free Libraries were planted in front of the school—one for English books and one for Chinese.
- **Music performances**, including March Music Madness, a daylong musical celebration with acts by students, parents and staff; twice annual orchestra concerts; the addition of a Middle School Choir; the continuing growth of our Conservatory of Music and 4<sup>th</sup> grade strings program; the first-ever performance of a student Chinese music ensemble under the direction of Gao Hong, a master of the pipa, a pear-shaped Chinese lute.
- **Recreational activities** such as rollerblading, biking and a bit of skiing and sledding in the season's minimal snowfall. A "Ninja Course" was added to the gym.
- **Support for academic success** through homework labs and student-to-student tutoring after school.
- **Family engagement** through parent education events such as the high school panel and a new parent mentoring program called Jiātíng, or Family.
- **Leadership development** through the Student Life Organization (SLO) led by prefects who oversee seven departments including Academics, Behavior, Activities Managemtn, Community Service,



Lower School and Sports. SLO-sponsored activities included WE Day, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade late nights, middle school dances and a successful drive to collect school supplies for shipping to students in Haiti. SLO leaders also developed an after school “Little Siblings” mentoring program for structured play and social time between Middle Schoolers and younger students in kindergarten, grade 1 and grade 2.

- **Relationship development** at the annual fall Middle School Retreat for grades 6 through 8 and at a 5<sup>th</sup> grade Kindness Retreat.
- **Public speaking opportunities** through speech competitions, debate, the science fair and Academic Performances.
- **Learning with technology** using the one-on-one iPad program for grades 7 and 8.



Yinghua students brought home 24 medals from the Midwest Region Chinese Speech Contest.

# FUTURE PLANS

## Future Plans

We are proud of Yinghua’s outstanding accomplishments including two Innovation Awards from the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools, a technology grant awarded to English teacher Kristin Nordvold and a Fox 9 Teacher award presented to PE Teacher Sarah Totall. As a 2015 National Blue Ribbon school, we are committed to the passion and hard work necessary to maximize every Yinghua student’s full potential. Yinghua is a success story because of this commitment.

In the coming year, Yinghua’s leaders will continue to implement the goals and processes outlined in the 2017-2020 Strategic Plan. Much of the work requires us to do what we do best—immerse students in Chinese language and culture, offer them real-world speaking and listening opportunities, and use assessments wisely to help teachers teach and students learn. A task force is working to develop fundraising strategies to help families save for the Middle School Trip to China or Taiwan and to create need-based financial support for the trip so that financial limitations are not a barrier to participation. One period per week has been added to the Middle School Social Studies schedule to create time for students to work on real-world application of language while traveling in or hosting guests from Chinese-speaking lands. A Chinese-speaking teacher has been added to the team of staff who guide our Student Life Organization. The school is working to enhance authentic real-world Chinese language speaking and listening opportunities outside of the classroom.



Physical Education teacher Sarah Totall was a Fox 9 Top Teacher.

# CONCLUSION

## Conclusion

Yinghua continues to achieve its mission of preparing students to be engaged global citizens through rigorous academics and immersion in Chinese language and culture in a safe, supportive and nurturing school environment:

### ACADEMIC

- Yinghua Academy was designated a REWARD school for the past three years. REWARD schools are Minnesota’s highest performing Title I schools, demonstrating exceptional student outcomes as well as success in closing the achievement gap.
- Our school out-performed the three comparative school districts in MCA Math proficiency for grades 3 to 8; Reading for grade 7; and Science for grade 5. In Reading, 33.8% of students showed high growth and in Math 37.7% attained high-growth status.
- The Confucius Institute at the University of Minnesota and the Minnesota Department of Education recognized 66 Yinghua students who were eligible to receive MDE Proficiency Certificates recognizing their successful performance on the Youth Chinese Test (YCT), Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK) Chinese proficiency test, Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) and STAMP Proficiency Assessment.

### SUSTAINABILITY

- School leaders and scores of parent and teacher researchers and writers published a Strategic Plan to guide curricular and organizational development through 2020.
- Yinghua won the State of Minnesota School Finance Award in 2016 and every year since 2008.
- We finished FY2017 with an expected 35% Fund Balance, far exceeding the model’s goal.
- Student retention reached 98% with an enrollment of 803 during the 2016-17 school year.

### RECOGNITION

- The Minnesota Association of Charter Schools recognized Yinghua twice for innovative teaching in 2016 and 2017.
- In the 2017 Minnesota Chinese Speech Contest, Yinghua students took home 24 awards for outstanding performance, and Yinghua graduates took first and third at the high school level.
- Fox 9 named Sarah Total a Top Teacher for the “Heart Safe, Body Safe” PE curriculum including roller skating, skiing, the Popsicle Run, Wheels Week and a new Ninja course.
- School Digger, an online resource ranking schools for test scores, student/teacher ratios and other metrics, ranked Yinghua 7 out of 441 Minnesota school districts.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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