

YINGHUA ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 18, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

Yinghua Academy Media Center: 1616 Buchanan St NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413

Board Members in Attendance: Cindy Moeller (Chair), Charles Robinson (Treasurer), Nathan Bode (Secretary), Colleen Ebinger, Paul Haller, Barbara Knott, Andrew Lawton, Pamella Stommes, and Yinglu Zeglin

Board Members Not in Attendance: Amanda Schneider

Executive Director in Attendance: Dr. Luyi Lien

YACA Co-Chair in Attendance: Gloria Low

Public in Attendance: Ying Zhang, Paul Landahl, Kate Herman, and Amy Erickson (from Friends of Education)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Moeller called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

II. APPROVALS (6 minutes)

a. 03/18/2024 Agenda

Ms. Moeller presented the draft agenda.

The MOTION by Mr. Bode to approve the agenda was seconded and passed.

b. 02/20/2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

Ms. Moeller presented the minutes for the February Board meeting. An edit to public comment section was recommend by Ms. Moeller.

The MOTION by Ms. Moeller to approve the February meeting minutes as amended was seconded and passed. Mr. Bode voted no.

III. FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE (19 minutes)

Mr. Robinson summarized the current financials, which are 67% complete for the 2023-24 fiscal year. The current student enrollment is 837 students. Expenditures are at 65% and revenues are at 64% of the revised annual budget. There is currently a total net gain of \$124,253 across all funds.

Mr. Robinson explained the net loss in in Fund 02, Food Service, was due primarily to a timing issue of receiving reimbursements from state. There is also the issue of students signing up but not taking lunch.

Mr. Robinson went on to give background about how the school could be earning more interest on its reserve bank balances. Eric Foster, the school business manager, has been researching ways the school could be investing its reserve balances in certificates of deposits (CDs) to earn more interest income. The proposed investment strategy involves investing the reserve balances in various time maturity certificate deposits (known as CD laddering). These CDs are insured through the FDIC.

The MOTION by Ms. Ebinger to approve the investment plan to invest reserve funds into certificate of deposit was seconded and approved.

IV. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (7 minutes)

Dr. Lien provided an update that the Red Envelope campaign has raised \$49,114 as of this meeting.

Ms. Moeller mentioned that in the past the committee had followed up with people who had given previously but had not given during the current campaign. Based on analysis of the effectiveness of this practice in last year's Red Envelope campaign, the committee decided not to do the follow-ups.

Dr. Lien mentioned that Mala Thao is reviewing Yinghua Academy's fundraising effort. Ms. Thao has extensive work experience in fundraising and was recommended to Dr. Lien by a Yinghua parent. They have met several times to discuss how the school's fundraising efforts could be improved upon. Ms. Moeller is pausing her effort to find a consultant to assist the Friends of Yinghua Academy (FOYA) while these discussions take place.

V. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE (14 minutes)

Ms. Moeller gave an update from the Personnel Committee. As mentioned previously, Dr. Lien has requested frequent feedback. This is the second time this academic year the committee has requested feedback from both Board members and her direct reports.

Ms. Moeller went on to mention that a draft of the Executive Director job description has been developed with input from Dr. Lien. The committee is currently soliciting feedback to improve it.

Ms. Moeller said she had talked with Dr. Shindler from Cal State-LA about the upcoming School Climate Survey. The current plan is to start the survey on Wednesday, April 10th

during parent-teacher conferences and last until April 19th. The survey will go out to parents, teachers, staff, and 6th to 8th grade students. The goal is to have preliminary results in the first week of May. The committee is still determining the best process to share the results by the end of the school year. Ms. Moeller added that there is a potential to administer a survey to elementary grades. The elementary survey has fewer questions and simpler language than the secondary survey Yinghua has used before. The board indicated support of doing the elementary survey this year. Ms. Zeglin asked if it is possible to modify any of the questions on the elementary questionnaire. Ms. Moeller said she would check on this.

VI. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE (8 minutes)

Dr. Haller mentioned the upcoming School Board elections. There are 4 Board spots open this year. Potential candidates have until Friday to apply.

Ms. Moeller mentioned the Annual Board meeting is coming up on April 25th. During that meeting potential candidates will be given time to introduce themselves and share why they are interested in serving on the Yinghua board.

VII. BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR TEACHERS AND STAFF (9 minutes)

Ms. Knott and Ms. Ebinger presented updates on ways the Board can support teachers and staff. They had solicited input from YACA representatives. There was Board discussion on ways to help.

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT (46 minutes)

Dr. Lien highlighted items in her most recent Executive Director's Report. There are currently 837 students enrolled and attendance is above 95%. Term 2 ended on March 2 and report cards are being reviewed with the plan to mail them March 27. Term 3 started with the focus on academic performance and year-end testing.

Dr. Lien said the Yinghua Academy Total Special Education System (TSES) is now available on the school website and staff intranet. There was a Cybersecurity presentation to 8th graders during Ms. Meyer's classes with support from the school's IT team to answer any questions.

Mr. Robinson and Dr. Lien provided an update on bus contract renewal options with MTN.

Dr. Lien concluded her update with a few additional items. The Taiwan Teacher Intern cohort is staying here until April 19th. Yinghua's Q-Comp Leadership Team convened to address issues related to biased comments and inappropriate language in the classroom. The Q-Comp leaders will discuss with their smaller grade level teams.

Yinghua Academy has applied for \$28,000 in funding from the PrairieCare Fund to support a partnership with the Cook Center for Human Resources. Finally, the Space and Scheduling task force has 11 participants and continues to meet with the goal of improving planning for the next academic year.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT (4 minutes)

Amy Erickson from the Yinghua Academy's authorizer, Friends of Education, was in attendance. She mentioned that she was there to support us and had recently done a site visit.

Kate Herman said she appreciated the discussion provided about the afterschool program.

Ying Zhang is a candidate for the upcoming School Board election. She is interested in support for special education. She has visited with parents of special needs students and is interested in ways the school, family and community can support this.

Paul Landahl mentioned he was there to find ways to be more involved.

XI. ADJOURN (1 minute)

Ms. Moeller concluded the meeting.

The MOTION by Ms. Knott to adjourn at 7:55 p.m. was seconded and passed.

Minutes drafted by Nathan Bode

Approved by vote of Board on: 04/15/2024