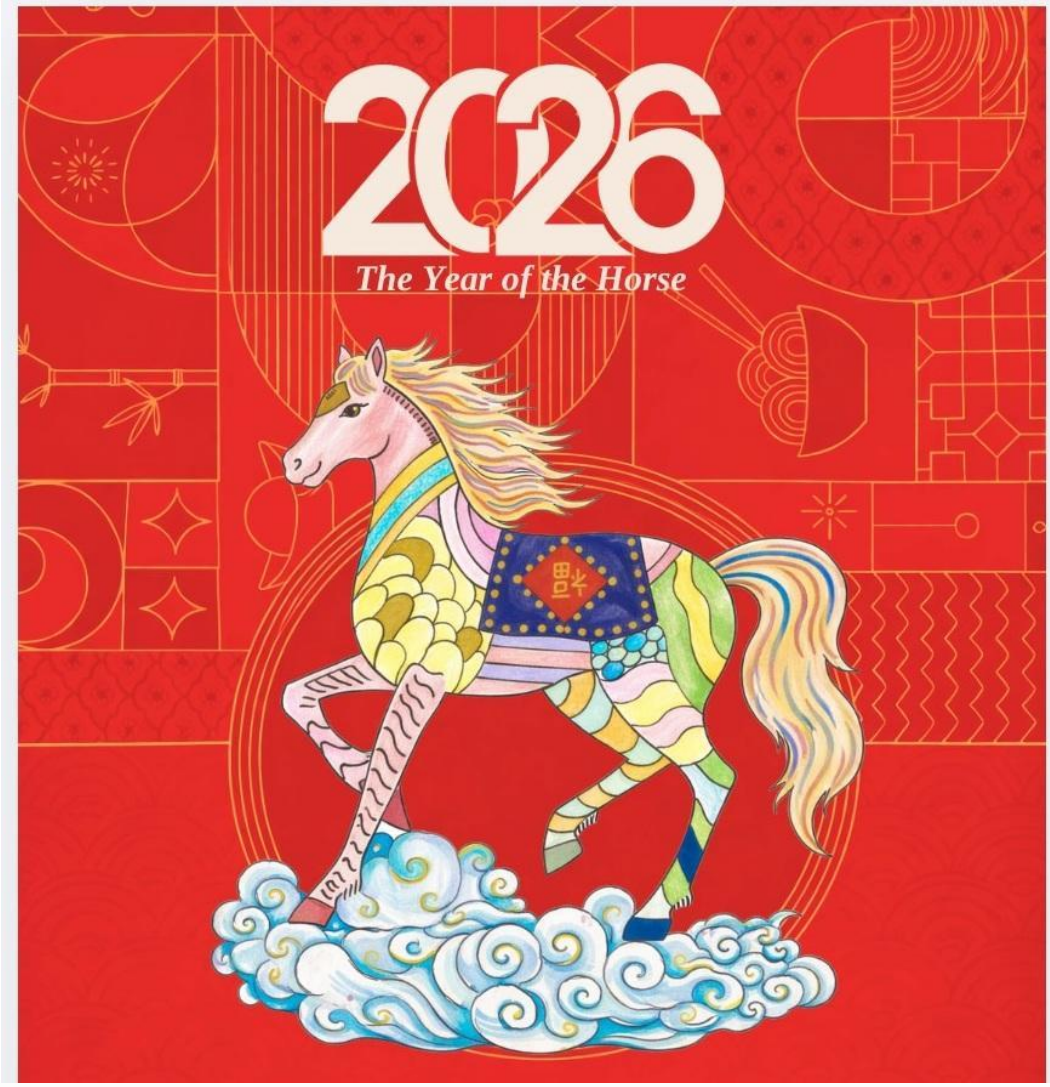
英華 | YINGHUA ACADEMY



Annual Report 2025-2026

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About Yinghua Academy

Two Decades of Mandarin Immersion: A Milestone Year for Yinghua

In the 2025–2026 school year, Yinghua Academy celebrated 20 years of tuition-free Mandarin immersion education and received the 2025 Outstanding K–16 Program Award from the Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS). The 20th anniversary gala brought together families, alumni, staff, and friends. In partnership with Friends of Yinghua Academy (FOYA), the gala raised $230,785 to support the school's long-term goal of providing competitive compensation for teachers and staff.

Yinghua's math proficiency rate on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments rose from 84.9% in 2025 to 88.7% in 2026. Through Small Group Learning, teachers had dedicated time to address learning gaps and challenge students at their level. Students demonstrated their Mandarin proficiency in national and international competitions and used the language beyond the classroom through exchanges with partner schools in China and Taiwan. Essays by 16 Yinghua students and alumni were selected for *West Meets East: 100 American Middle and High School Students' Stories About China*. Our annual Lunar New Year performances drew approximately 2,500 audience members, giving families and community members a chance to experience how Yinghua brings Mandarin language and culture to life.

In 2026–2027, we will build on our academic progress by enriching students' learning experiences and strengthening social and emotional learning. Student and family feedback will guide our efforts to foster belonging and support student well-being. We will also invite input from the school community as we develop a new three- to five-year strategic plan and identify opportunities to strengthen our Mandarin immersion curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The Board and school leadership will assess how well our facilities can support enrollment and instructional needs, and we will work with FOYA to grow recurring support for competitive teacher and staff compensation.

History and Mission

History

Yinghua Academy, the first public full-immersion Chinese charter school in the United States, serves students in grades K–8 with a mission to cultivate bilingual, biliterate, and globally minded learners who are prepared to succeed academically and thrive in a multicultural world. Since its founding in 2006, the school has combined rigorous academics with a rich cultural

curriculum, ensuring that students excel in core subjects while developing advanced Chinese language proficiency. Students consistently achieve academic recognition and awards, reflecting both rigor and confidence in their learning.

Yinghua Academy opened in 2006 with 76 students in kindergarten through third grade and expanded one grade level at a time. Growing enrollment prompted the school's move from St. Paul to Northeast Minneapolis in 2009. Enrollment rose from 315 students in 2009–10 to 512 in 2012–13, putting pressure on space at the new campus. To accommodate that growth, Yinghua opened its Kinder Campus in fall 2012, housing four kindergarten classrooms with 112 students during the 2012–13 and 2013–14 school years. A major expansion of the main campus, completed in August 2014, increased its capacity from approximately 500 to 800 students. Enrollment reached 836 in 2023–24, 852 in 2024–25, and 875 in 2025–26, making Yinghua one of the nation's largest Chinese immersion programs. Families continue to choose Yinghua for its rigorous academics, innovative programming, and bilingual, bicultural learning environment, which prepares students to become engaged global citizens.

As a public charter school, Yinhua Academy is its own district. Yinghua Academy was ranked #2 of 458 districts by the state, #2 among middle schools, and ranked 11 of the 869 Minnesota elementary schools according to SchoolDigger. This makes Yinghua Academy better than 99% of Minnesota districts. In addition, U.S. News & World Report ranked our middle school #3 among 1,596 middle schools in MN, and #2 middle school among Minnesota charter schools. These achievements highlight the exceptional quality of Yinghua's programs, enhance our visibility, and serve as a powerful tool to attract prospective families and strengthen enrollment.

On Niche.com, Yinghua Academy is ranked #1 Best Public Middle School Teachers in Minnesota, #1 Best Charter Elementary School in Minnesota, #1 Best Charter Middle School in Minnesota, and #2 Best Public Elementary School Teachers in Minnesota.

Mission

The mission of Yinghua Academy is to prepare our 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 Academy prepares students to become engaged and productive global citizens through a research-based educational program. Yinghua leaders search best practice to make sure the immersion works, by following the **Research-based** findings from education and language acquisition research guide how we design our curriculum, teach in an immersion setting, and support students. Teachers also use classroom observations and assessment results to see how students are progressing and adjust instruction to meet their needs. This approach informs three commitments.

1. **A rigorous academic curriculum.** Students build knowledge and skills across subject areas as they learn to think critically, solve problems, and communicate clearly. Teachers build on what students already know, give them opportunities to practice and receive feedback, and guide them toward more challenging work as they gain independence.
2. **Immersion in Chinese language and culture.** Students learn Mandarin by using it to study academic subjects, ask questions, and share ideas throughout the school day. They build language skills through meaningful use, with support such as visuals, demonstrations, and guided practice. Through literature, the arts, and cultural traditions, students deepen their understanding of Chinese-speaking communities and learn to consider different perspectives.
3. **A nurturing and supportive school environment.** Students learn in a community where they are known, respected, and encouraged to take on challenges. Clear expectations and consistent routines help students know what to do and where to turn for help. Educators and families work together to support each child's academic, social, and emotional growth.



Front entrance of Yinghua Academy.

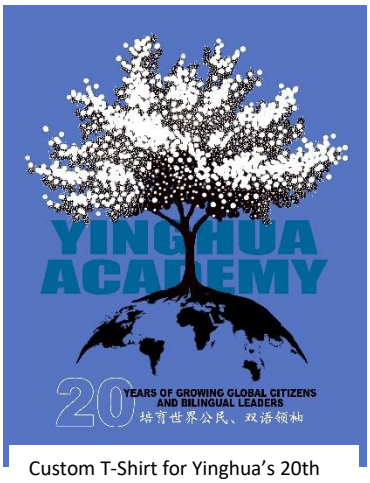
2025–2026 School Year: Celebrating Yinghua Academy's 20th Anniversary

The 2025–2026 school year marked Yinghua Academy's 20th year of operation. Throughout the year, students, families, staff, alumni, and friends came together to celebrate two decades of dedication and achievement in Mandarin immersion education.

20th Anniversary Kickoff Picnic

On September 5, families gathered for food trucks and the chance to reconnect at Yinghua's 20th Anniversary Kickoff Picnic. The school distributed nearly 800 commemorative T-shirts

featuring the anniversary message “20 Years of Growing Global Citizens and Bilingual Leaders” in English and Chinese. At the event, 150 families completed the “20 Ways to Support Yinghua” survey.



Custom T-Shirt for Yinghua’s 20th Anniversary

Grandparents’ Day and the Introduction of Friends of Yinghua Academy

At Grandparents’ Day, Yinghua introduced families and guests to **Friends of Yinghua Academy (FOYA)**, which brings together families, alumni, and community supporters to invest in the school’s long-term future. FOYA’s founding chair, Cindy Moeller, marked the occasion with a **$200,000 gift** in honor of Yinghua’s 20 years of achievement.

In 2025–2026, FOYA raised **$329,503**, contributing to Yinghua’s long-term financial sustainability. This fundraising helps Yinghua sustain its Mandarin immersion program by offering competitive compensation to attract and retain teachers and staff and investing in professional development and instructional resources.

Lunar New Year VIP Event and Bilingual Cookbook

Nearly 60 guests attended Yinghua Academy’s Lunar New Year VIP receptions, held in conjunction with two performances at Bethel University. A photo display traced Yinghua’s growth from its first year to its recognition as a leader in Mandarin immersion education. Guests gathered for light refreshments and received a gift box with a Yinghua water bottle and the **20th Anniversary Cookbook**. Published in Chinese and English, the cookbook features 20 recipes contributed by teachers and staff, reflecting the range of culinary traditions in our school community and Yinghua’s commitment to bilingual education.

20th Anniversary Documentary Premiere and Fundraising Gala


Executive Director, Board members and a staff member share the stage to announce the progress of attaining our fundraising goals for the evening

On May 30, 2026, Yinghua Academy welcomed 393 guests to the Hilton in Minneapolis for its 20th Anniversary and Fundraising Gala. The Board of Directors and school administrators spent months planning the event, which brought together families, alumni, staff, and friends to celebrate two decades of Mandarin immersion education.

A highlight of the evening was the premiere of Yinghua's 20th anniversary documentary. Through interviews with former board chairs, school directors, students, and parents, the film traced Yinghua's growth and captured how members of the school community helped shape its first 20 years.

The evening featured live music and performances, a silent auction with 20 items donated by staff and families, and a live auction with six items. The gala raised **$230,785** to support Yinghua's long-term goal of providing competitive salaries for teachers and staff.



Cherry blossom center piece at every table.



Each guest received a bid number to participate in auction events. Here, guests are donating during the "moment of giving."

Yinghua Academy's Strategic Direction, 2023–2026

Yinghua Academy advances its long-term vision through successive strategic plans, each shaped by the school's priorities at that stage of its development. The four-year 2023–2026 Strategic Plan focused on three initiatives: delivering world-class Chinese immersion education, nurturing the whole child, and strengthening partnerships within the Yinghua community and beyond. Together, these initiatives support a school environment where students and staff feel valued, supported, and inspired to grow. Teaching at Yinghua is a source of pride, grounded in high expectations, collaboration among educators, and a shared belief in the value of immersion education.

2023-2026 Strategic Plan
Initiative 1: World Class Mandarin Immersion
Initiative 2: Cultivate and Equip Students' Potential
Initiative 3: Partnerships and Relationships

During the 2025–2026 school year, Yinghua Academy advanced the three priorities of its 2023–2026 Strategic Plan. We strengthened Mandarin immersion instruction, expanded opportunities for students to build confidence and explore their interests, and deepened relationships that connect our school community to the wider world. Each priority supports our mission of preparing students to become engaged and productive global citizens.

1. World-Class Mandarin Immersion

Yinghua refined its teacher evaluation process to provide more specific feedback and offered coaching and support to all team members. By paying close attention to everyday teaching practices and drawing on research in Mandarin immersion, our educators strengthen their work as a team and continue to improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Yinghua's immersion program earned national recognition in 2025 with the Outstanding K–16 Program Award from the Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS).



Lai Zhuren, Dr. Lien (center), and Wang Laoshi receiving the CLASS award.

The Friends of Yinghua Academy (FOYA) raised $329,503 in 2025–2026, contributing to Yinghua's long-term financial sustainability. Sustained fundraising helps the school offer

competitive compensation to attract and retain talented teachers and staff and invest in the professional learning and instructional resources that sustain a model Mandarin immersion program.

2. Cultivate and Equip Students

Yinghua uses the **Responsive Classroom** approach to build a sense of belonging through daily routines and positive relationships. **Second Step** provides structured lessons for teaching social and emotional skills, and our partnership with the **Cook Center** gives teachers, staff, and families additional resources to support students. We work to ensure that every student has a trusted adult at school to turn to for guidance and support.

Through the **Dragon Life Organization**, middle school students practice leadership skills and learn to express their ideas with confidence and poise. Dedicated **Small Group Learning** time helps address learning gaps and allows teachers to work more closely with students to support their academic, linguistic, cultural, and social growth. **Afternoon homeroom** gives students additional time to connect with teachers and work on homework. Clubs, sports, competitions, and other enrichment activities help students explore new interests, take on challenges, and discover their strengths. Visiting international experts also share their expertise with staff and the broader Yinghua community.

3. Partnerships and Relationships

Yinghua streamlined communication with families and across school teams and launched a new website to make school information easier to find. **Tea & Talk** sessions gave families opportunities to speak directly with school leaders, while **Yinghua Academy Parent University** offered practical guidance on how families can support learning at home. Families responded positively to both programs.

To help students prepare for high school, Yinghua hosted panels with representatives from a range of schools so students could learn what to expect and explore their options. Yinghua has also hosted annual alumni gatherings for the past three years, helping graduates stay connected to the school and build a network they can draw on after graduation.

Over the past three years, Yinghua has strengthened ties with immersion educators and partnered with universities in the Twin Cities and elsewhere in the United States to host aspiring immersion teachers. Partnerships with universities in China and Taiwan support teacher recruitment and create opportunities for research and professional collaboration.

Yinghua's **12 sister schools in China and Taiwan** give students opportunities to connect with peers and learn across cultures. Visiting interns, teachers, and performing groups from China and Taiwan bring new perspectives and cultural experiences to campus. Student trips to China and Taiwan deepen these relationships and give students firsthand opportunities to use Mandarin beyond the classroom.

Mandarin Immersion – Yinghua Students Shine in National and International Competition

During the 2025–2026 school year, students actively participated in Chinese competitions organized by various institutions, including the American Academy of International Culture and Education (AAICE), the Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS), and the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Chicago, among others.

During the 2025–2026 school year, 665 students participated in competitions, and 132 received awards or recognition. Held across the Midwest and nationwide in various formats, these competitions gave Yinghua students valuable opportunities to apply their Mandarin skills. The number of Yinghua contestants who received awards or recognition reflects students' strong Mandarin proficiency.

These competitions encouraged students to organize and apply the skills they had learned, take the initiative to seek support from teachers, collaborate with peers, and practice intentionally to deepen their learning. Students showcased their work in various forms—writing essays about sports, delivering speeches about their dreams, collaborating in groups to share reflections on their communities, and expressing themselves through dance or visual art. Through these events, students shared their talents with peers in other Chinese programs and gained valuable learning experiences. The competitions are listed below in chronological order.

1. **The fifth "My View of China" Short Video Competition:** Submission Open Date was 9/10/2025. The winners were announced on 10/20/2025. Twenty Yinghua Academy students from grades 4–8 proudly participated in the 5th "My View of China" Short Video Competition, hosted by the Chinese Consulate General in Chicago. This competition is open to residents of the 11 Midwest States with a focus on youth connected to the "50,000 in 5 years" China initiative, as well as anyone with personal travel, online, or local cultural experiences related to China.
   Our students' creative projects showcased language proficiency, cultural understanding, and personal perspectives on China. All twenty students received awards or recognition. One student won first prize, one student won second prize, 9 students won third prize, and 9 students received Participation Awards.

2. **The 21st National CLASS Essay Contest:** The contest submission deadline is the end of October, 2025. One hundred ten Yinghua Academy students from 3rd through 8th grade were selected by their teachers to submit essays to the 21st National Chinese Language Association of Secondary Elementary Schools (CLASS) Essay Contest. The theme was Sports and physical activity (commemorating the Olympics and global camaraderie). The competition is open to all middle school and high school students learning Chinese in

the U.S. The essays must be the student's original work, completed without a teacher's or anyone else's corrections or assistance.

Among over 1,000 submissions nationwide, six Yinghua Academy students won silver awards, 20 students received bronze awards, and the rest received participation awards.

3. **2026 Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS) National Chinese Talent Contest**: The contest took place in the spring 2026 with award results and honors announced around March and April 2026. Twenty-six Yinghua students and one Yinghua class participated in the 3rd Annual CLASS National Chinese Talent Contest. The contest aims to showcase K–12 student achievement in Chinese language, performance, and cultural arts. The contest features six categories: singing, dancing, instruments, arts, sports, and language.

   Nearly 2,000 students nationwide entered the contest. Among Yinghua participants in the KG–G5 group, five students won first place, two won second place, and four students and one class won third place. In the G6–G8 group, four students won first place and six won third place.

4. **2026 National Chinese Speech Contest — American Academy of International Culture and Education (AAICE)**: This contest took place in April 2026 with semi-finals and finals typically held around late March and April. The results and trophies are announced by May 2026.
   The 2026 theme was "Building Bridges Through Chinese Language." This contest encourages language proficiency, promotes cultural learning, builds confidence and stage presence, and supports Chinese education.

   More than 700 contestants representing over 80 schools and across 33 states participated in this contest. From Yinghua, twenty-eight students participated. Of the 28 students, in the G3-G5 World Language Group, 1 student placed first, and 1 student placed third. In the G6–G8 Immersion Group, 1 student placed first, 1 student placed second, and 1 student placed third. In all groups, 11 students received honorable mention. Our students' accomplishments are truly impressive and reflect their hard work, dedication, and commitment to excellence in Chinese language learning.

5. **2026 "Singing with Me" National Chinese Music Video Competition organized by North American Culture and Education Academy (NACEA):** This competition had a submission deadline of February 28, 2026. It showcases Chinese language learning outcomes and fosters creativity by displaying Chinese language learning and cultural expression through musical performance.

More than 300 students from 23 states, recommended by 88 teachers, participated in the competition. Among the Yinghua students who participated, one placed second, one placed third, and one student's music video was featured during the award ceremony.

6. **The 6th Midwest Chinese Bridge Show for Primary School Students:** A total of 15 Yinghua students from kindergarten through grade 6 advanced to the final round of the 6th Midwest Chinese Bridge Show for Primary School Students, held on May 9, 2026, in Minnetonka. These students were among 30 regional finalists. Among Yinghua contestants, three students placed first, five placed second, six placed third, and four earned the Excellence in Participation Award.

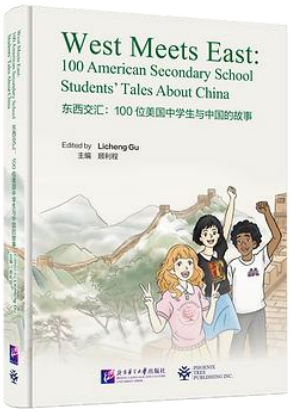
   Their outstanding performances showcased both strong Chinese language skills and the excellence of Yinghua's immersion education. Teachers Meng-Hsin Liu and Dongmei Li received Outstanding Teaching Awards in recognition of their dedication and guidance in supporting student success.



Awards Ceremony for the 2026 Chinese Bridge Competition, Midwest Region

7. **The 2026 Midwest Grades 7-12 Chinese Speech Contest**: More than 60 students from across the Midwest participated in the 2026 Midwest Grades 7–12 Chinese Speech Contest. Seven of our 7th and 8th grade students advanced to the final round, and they all performed exceptionally well. Among Yinghua students in the G7–8 Chinese Immersion Program Group, one placed first, one placed second, and two placed third. Among Yinghua students in the G7–8 Heritage Group, 2 students placed second.

8. **Student Voices Shine in Published Essay Collection:** After a year and a half of writing and revision, essays by 16 Yinghua Academy students and alumni were selected for inclusion in *West Meets East: 100 American Secondary School Students' Tales About China*, published in 2025. On October 7, 2025, the publisher's photography team visited Yinghua to interview the featured authors. The students and alumni shared their experiences learning Chinese, reflecting on what brought them joy, what challenged them, and what they discovered along the way.



Essays by Yinghua students and alumni were selected for inclusion in this book.

Mandarin Immersion – Yinghua: A Culturally Rich Learning Experience

At Yinghua Academy, students, families, and community members explore Chinese language and culture together. These shared experiences broaden their perspectives and deepen their cultural understanding as they celebrate what they have in common and respect their differences.

Third Annual International Festival

Held on September 27, the Yinghua Academy Community Association (YACA) successfully hosted the 3rd Annual International Festival, bringing community members together for a celebration of culture, food, and global connections. The event featured cultural booths, international food tastings, student games, and family activities. Teachers, staff, students, families, and community volunteers participated, showcasing the school's diverse cultural heritage through food, performances, and community engagement. The festival strengthened relationships and celebrated the diversity of the Yinghua community.

Grandparents' Day

Grandparents' Day at Yinghua Academy draws on the Chinese tradition of the Double Ninth Festival, a time to honor elders and wish them long life and good fortune. The celebration connects this tradition with the practice of inviting grandparents to share their stories and wisdom with younger generations. By spending time together, students and grandparents strengthen family bonds and pass down the traditions, values, and stories that connect generations.



Grandparents received hand-made cards from kindergarteners on Grandparents' Day.

On October 21, 2025, Yinghua Academy welcomed more than 480 grandparents and guests for Grandparents' Day. Staff and YACA volunteers greeted guests with chrysanthemum tea before they joined their grandchildren in classrooms to learn together and share stories. Many grandparents shared family traditions and memories, and those who couldn't attend sent recorded messages for students to enjoy. These exchanges brought the day's theme, "Rooted in Love, Growing Together," to life.

Chinese Lunar New Year Celebration

Each year, Yinghua students have a special opportunity to be immersed in the cultural celebration of the Lunar New Year. 2026 was the Year of the Horse. The performance theme was "Riding with Responsibility: Hua Mulan, Guardian of Family and Nation." Students and staff embodied this theme throughout the performances—through songs, dances, dramatizations of cultural legends, and more.



Students performed the story of Mulan during the 2026 Lunar New Year Performance.

In the process of preparing for the Lunar New Year stage, students at each grade level are immersed in a cultural experience. For example, each year, sixth graders form three groups to learn and perform a traditional Chinese ribbon dance, a traditional dragon dance, or a modern dance battle routine. The eighth graders enact the story of Mulan in traditional Chinese costumes from that era.

Attendance at the 2026 performances totaled 2,438 and included family members, community members, and other guests. Yinghua also partnered with iDream.TV to livestream the performances for those unable to attend in person. The livestream attracted 121 online purchases from across the United States and around the world, including Sweden, Germany, Portugal, Canada, India, the Netherlands, Puerto Rico, and Taiwan.

Developing Global Citizens: Pathways to Bilingualism and Multiculturalism

According to the International Center for Language Studies, roughly 18.5% of the world's population speaks English and roughly 13.9% speaks a dialect of Mandarin. A 2025 study on bilingualism reported that approximately 43% of people worldwide speak two languages fluently, and another 17% speak three or more languages — meaning about 60% of the global population is bilingual or multilingual. (Source: "Bilingualism 2025: Key Stats from the US, UK & Worldwide")

A pillar of Yinghua's mission is to prepare students to be engaged and productive global citizens. Achieving this goal depends on students developing cultural competence and language proficiency. Proficiency in Mandarin and English expands students' opportunities to connect with people and communities across cultures. To provide a high-quality learning experience, Yinghua focuses on Mandarin and English development through its immersion environment,

strong teaching, and engaging experiences. To support a strong foundation in Mandarin, Yinghua establishes clear language zones throughout the building, helping students transition smoothly between learning environments and focus on their subjects.

Bilingualism - Overview of Language Instruction by Grade

Yinghua Academy's immersion model is intentionally designed to develop high levels of bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross-cultural competence. The structure of language allocation evolves across grade levels to support students' developmental needs and academic progression.

In kindergarten and grade one, Yinghua implements a full Mandarin immersion model, in which all core subjects—mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts—are taught entirely in Mandarin Chinese. This approach provides young learners with a strong linguistic foundation during the years when language acquisition is most naturally accelerated.

In grades two and three, the full immersion model continues for core content areas, while students begin formal English Language Arts instruction for approximately 250 minutes per week. Students transition from the Mandarin immersion classrooms to designated English instruction spaces, reflecting the immersion best practice of strict language separation. Classrooms are intentionally equipped to reinforce the target language: Mandarin-only materials, visuals, and texts in the immersion classrooms, and English-language materials in the English classrooms. This purposeful design strengthens language boundaries and promotes authentic language use.

In middle school, the share of instruction in English increases gradually to prepare students for high school. Mandarin remains the primary language of instruction through grade 7. By grade 8, students receive approximately half of their instruction in Mandarin and half in English.

Grade Level	Mandarin Instruction*	English Instruction**
Grade 5	70%	30%
Grades 6-7	60%	40%
Grade 8	50%	50%

Percentages are approximate and reflect the share of instructional time.
***Taught in Mandarin:** Chinese Language Arts, mathematics, science, music, orchestra, art, and selected social studies units.
****Taught in English:** English Language Arts, science, physical education, and other social studies units.

This carefully sequenced model ensures that students continue developing strong Mandarin proficiency while building advanced academic English skills, culminating in well-prepared, confident bilingual learners.

Bilingual Success Highlighted by Competitions

Supporting research shows that bilingual students benefit academically as the strengthening of one language enhances the other. At Yinghua, students not only participate in Chinese competitions and earn recognition—they also leverage their bilingual skills to excel in other academic competitions. A few highlights include:

- Battle of the Books: Yinghua held its internal Battle of the Books competition on May 8, with seven teams from grades 3–5 competing for advancement to the Friends of Education Battle of the Books competition. One of Yinghua's third-grade teams advanced to the final event held at Nova Classical Academy. Our students demonstrated outstanding teamwork, preparation, and sportsmanship throughout the competition, finishing just one point shy of a first-place tie. Their strong performance reflected months of reading, collaboration, and dedication.
- Spelling Bee: Yinghua Academy had its Annual Spelling Bee Competition on December 19.

These accomplishments reflect how bilingualism strengthens students' overall academic performance and broadens their opportunities for success.

Multiculturalism - Expanding Students' Worldview

For the development of multiculturalism in our students, their worldview is expanded in two ways. First, the outside world is brought to our students through connecting with sister schools and through visits from national or international organizations. Second, the students' worldview is expanded by bringing them to see the world through the Summer China Camp and the Summer Taiwan trip.

Bringing the World to Our Students: Connecting with Sister Schools

During the 2025–2026 school year, Yinghua students continued exchanging messages with their peers at sister schools, and Yinghua Academy established relationships with two new partner schools in China. Hengshui High School in Hebei emphasizes academic achievement through a structured daily schedule and frequent exams. Taihu Xuetang in Suzhou draws on classical Chinese educational traditions to support whole-person development through daily meditation, martial arts practice, and the study of classical Chinese texts. Learning about these two approaches broadened Yinghua students' perspectives and deepened their appreciation for different educational values.

Bringing the World to Our Students: Hosting Guests from National and International Organizations

Each year, Yinghua hosts international university students, who are in the process of becoming teachers. For the 2025–2026 school year, two intern teachers joined the Yinghua community for ten months. Through their interactions with these intern teachers, students are exposed to individuals who are born and raised in a culture different from their own.

Additionally, Yinghua hosted numerous national and international visitors and organizations during the 2025–2026 school year. Each of these opportunities also gives students a glimpse into the wider world. The visits are presented in chronological order:

- On September 26, Yinghua Academy welcomed a group of 14 performers from the Taiwan Acrobatic Troupe of the National Taiwan College of Performing Arts, along with accompanying community members. The visitors spent time interacting with students in classrooms and presented a short performance that captivated and impressed our students. Through this cultural exchange, students gained insight into the dedication and practice required for such high-level performances. The visit from a professional international troupe enriched our school community with a vibrant cultural experience.



Students enjoying Taiwan Acrobatic Troupe's visit.

- On Friday, October 24, three representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Chicago visited Yinghua Academy. They observed kindergarten classrooms, interacted with students, and attended a welcome assembly in the gym during period 2. Middle school students also attended the assembly and performed.
- On the evening of April 30, illustrator Julia Kuo, creator of the new book *Bing's Cherries*, visited Yinghua Academy. Approximately 15 families attended. Wild Rumpus Bookstore was on-site with copies of Kuo's books available for purchase and signing. Kuo shared her journey as a book illustrator, discussed her work and the story behind *Bing's Cherries*, and met with students and families. Families responded very positively, and several parents generously purchased and donated copies of Kuo's books to the Yinghua library.

Bring our student out into the world: Summer Camp in China

After winning the 2024 "Chinese Bridge" Dubbing Show, five Yinghua students—three current students and two 2024 graduates—were selected to participate in the 2025 "Chinese Bridge" Chinese Language + Film Dubbing Themed Summer Camp. The camp ran from August 25 to September 7, with activities in Beijing, Handan (Hebei), and Tianjin. Due to scheduling conflicts, four students attended.

Bringing Our Students Out into the World: Summer Trip to Taiwan

From June 12 to 26, 2026, 31 Yinghua students and four chaperones took part in a study abroad trip to Taiwan. Starting in Taipei, the group traveled from north to south, visiting communities on both the east and west sides of the island. Along the way, students visited three of Yinghua's sister schools: Minzu Elementary School, Taipei Municipal Yangming High School, and Kaohsiung Municipal Nanlong Junior High School.

Students experienced both homestays and dormitory living, participated in field trips, and were fully immersed in everyday Taiwanese culture. This meaningful journey left a lasting, positive impact, broadening students' perspectives and deepening their understanding of Taiwanese society, education, and culture.



Students on the Taiwan Trip went to Shangrila Leisure Farm on the 12th day.

Creating a Supportive Environment for Students

Kindness Magic Show for All Students

As part of Yinghua's October Kindness Month celebration, the Student Affairs Department, led by Ms. Edwards, invited magician Curtis Hed to help students explore kindness and see things from others' perspectives. Mr. Hed gave three performances in the gym on October 29 for students in grades K–6 and grade 8, followed by a performance for seventh graders on November 7. Through storytelling and magic, Mr. Hed showed students how they can practice kindness and empathy in their everyday interactions.

Building Classroom Community Through Afternoon Routines

In addition to morning meetings, Yinghua introduced afternoon homework time and a closing circle to strengthen students' sense of belonging. During homework time, students have opportunities to ask for help and support one another. The closing circle gives students time to share and listen to their classmates before the day ends. Together, these routines help students build relationships and learn to count on one another.

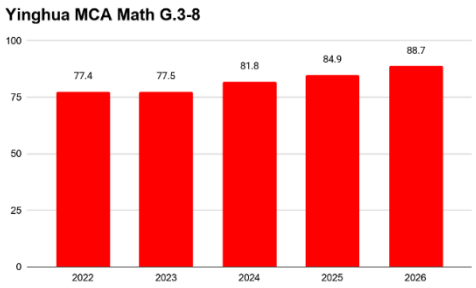
Innovation to Cultivate and Fulfill Student Potential

Yinghua Academy strives to help students reach their potential through both academic and extracurricular experiences.

Small Group Learning

During the 2024–2025 school year, Yinghua Academy piloted the Small Group Learning model. In 2025–2026, the model expanded to include grades 2–8. Students in each grade participated in small groups for Chinese Language Arts, English Language Arts, and math. Under this model, students met three to five times per week in groups led by subject-area teachers or interventionists. The initiative provided more individualized instruction to address students' specific academic needs in math, English, and Chinese. The smaller-group settings allowed teachers to offer targeted guidance, promote active participation, and monitor student progress closely.

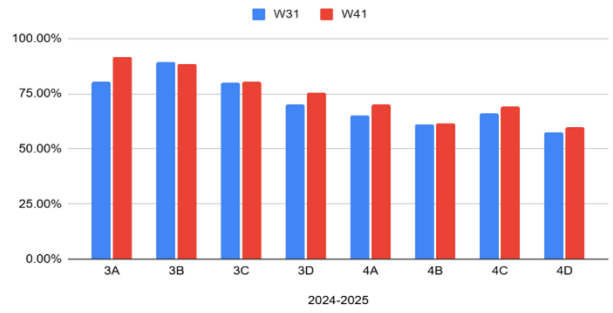
Graph 1 Yinghua Math MCA trend for Grades 3-8



During the expansion of Small Group Learning, students demonstrated gains in several assessed areas: math, English, and Chinese reading proficiency. In Graph 1, MCA Math Proficiency increased from 84.9% in 2025 to 88.7% in 2026, reflecting a continued upward trend over the past several years.

Graph 2 shows gains in reading proficiency for students in grades 3 and 4 on the YCT sample test, with scores rising from week 31 to week 41 and demonstrating steady literacy growth. Graph 3 illustrates the school's reading performance across multiple years through 2025. The 2026 MCA Reading assessment is a new assessment, and the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) does not recommend comparing its results with those from previous years.

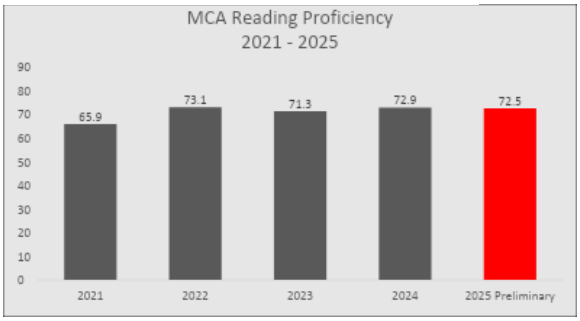
Graph 2 Grade 3 and Grade 4 YCT Sample Reading Test Progress



same structure of frequent small-group sessions to reinforce skills and deepen understanding.

These results highlight the effectiveness of differentiated instruction and the personalized attention provided through small group sessions. Students demonstrated increased confidence and motivation, with noticeable growth in participation and enthusiasm for learning. Due to its success, the Small Group Learning program will continue in the 2026–2027 school year, maintaining the

Graph 3 Yinghua MCA Reading Proficiency trend



ADSIS Interventions

During the 2025–2026 school year, Yinghua Academy continued to receive the Alternative Delivery of Specialized Instructional Services (ADSIS) grant, which supports student growth in three key areas: reading interventions, math

interventions, and behavior/organizational skills. Through this funding, students benefited from targeted small-group instruction tailored to their specific needs. Yinghua employed four additional intervention staff members who worked closely with students to promote academic success, skill development, and positive learning behaviors.

ADSIS interventions provided additional academic and behavioral support to help students thrive in both areas. ADSIS funding also advanced the schoolwide implementation of social-emotional learning (SEL) through the Second Step Social-Emotional Learning curriculum. SEL activities included goal-setting, identifying and managing emotions, collaborative problem-solving, and addressing conflict—all designed to foster social-emotional growth and a positive school culture.

Restructure Afterschool Activities

To support the sustainability of after-school programming, Yinghua added a new category of clubs alongside existing enrichment classes, music classes, tutoring, and Homework First. These clubs include the Girls' Technovation Club, LEGO League, and Debate.



2025-2026 LEGO League Team.

In 2025–2026, Yinghua Academy launched its first LEGO League team as part of the Extended Learning Program. After nearly two terms of preparation, the team won the Innovation Award. This award reflects the students' dedication and the joyful, meaningful learning experiences the school strives to provide.

Yinghua Academy's Debate team has existed for more than 10 years. It began with a group of parents who were passionate about debate and wanted to bring its educational benefits to Yinghua students. During the 2025–2026 school year, management of the team shifted from a parent-run model to a school-run club. With support from Yinghua staff, the Minnesota Urban Debate League, and parent volunteer coaches and judges, the team had a successful season.

Dragon Life Organization

The Dragon Life Organization (DLO) is a student organization made up of seventh- and eighth-grade students. Members plan events such as school dances and toy donations during the Christmas season. Through this work, they develop useful life and workplace skills, including project management, setting and meeting deadlines, creating and following a budget, and collaborating with others.

Yinghua Academy continues to build a culture of collaboration, connection, and mutual support—within the school, within the community, and internationally.

School Culture: Collaboration, Inclusion, and Positive Role Modeling

At Yinghua Academy, staff members model global citizenship for students through collaboration, professionalism, and respect. Shared planning, professional development, and staff recognition help build a school community where colleagues learn from one another and feel valued for their contributions.

Professional Development and Team Collaboration

Weekly meetings with direct reports provided shared planning time and included brief professional development sessions to strengthen teaching and learning. Leadership and administrative teams met every two weeks to coordinate priorities across the school and use data to guide instructional decisions. Comprehensive performance evaluations complemented these meetings by providing feedback and identifying areas for professional growth.

Building Connections Across Teams

During Staff Development Day in October 2025, approximately 80 staff members contributed dishes to a schoolwide potluck. After lunch, outdoor team-building games gave colleagues from different departments a chance to have fun and work together. During the closing reflection, many staff members said they appreciated the opportunity to get to know colleagues, better understand Yinghua's school culture, and connect around shared goals.

Staff Recognition and Appreciation

Yinghua Academy recognizes teachers and staff for the work they do each day to support students, help colleagues, and strengthen the school community.

Recognition Bonus

The Board of Directors approved an allocation of 1% of the salary budget for recognition bonuses for returning staff. In the 2025–2026 school year, approximately 30% of Yinghua's teachers and staff received a bonus in their October paycheck. Recipients were selected for excellence in job performance, initiative and dedication, and for modeling professionalism and respect. Dr. Lien sent each recipient a personalized message recognizing their contributions.

Employee of the Term

This award recognizes sustained contributions that strengthen student learning, support colleagues, or bring the school community together. Honorees receive a certificate and a gift card, and their contributions are featured on the school's display board for one term.

Employee of the Week
This program recognizes specific actions that make Yinghua a better place to work and learn. Staff may nominate a colleague or themselves by sharing an example of how the nominee supported students, colleagues, or families. Honorees receive the Star Parking privilege for the week.

Partnerships and Relationships Within the Community

During the 2025–26 school year, Yinghua staff created and supported many opportunities for families to engage with the school. These events ranged from small group discussions to informative sessions.

Tea & Talk with Dr. Lien

Tea & Talk sessions with Yinghua's Executive Director, Dr. Lien, continued this year. Throughout the year, Dr. Lien hosted eight one-hour informal conversations for parents and guardians to ask questions and discuss topics important to them. Three sessions focused on grade-specific themes, though families were welcome to attend any session regardless of their child's grade. Each session was limited to 10–15 participants, and 26 people attended in total. These sessions provided an opportunity for families to share their perspectives on topics such as class size, the outcomes of small-group learning, and arrangements for students who do not receive intervention services.

Yinghua University

Yinghua University returned in 2025–2026 with programs that helped parents and guardians support their children's well-being, understand school operations, and connect with the wider community.

- **Community Film Screening | October 28, 2025.** Yinghua Academy and the Minnesota Chapter of the U.S.–China People's Friendship Association co-hosted a screening of *Our Time Machine* in the school library. About 40 attendees watched the documentary and discussed its themes of creativity and family relationships. A local artist also shared her original doll artwork.
- **Charter School Finances | January 30, 2026.** Board Chair Colleen Ebinger and former Treasurer Charlie Robinson led a virtual session explaining how charter schools are funded and answering families' questions. They addressed uncertainty about federal funding and reported that Yinghua remained in a strong financial position.
- **Ask a Therapist | March 30, April 27, and May 11, 2026.** Dan Madsen, a licensed mental health counselor and therapist with Sagent Behavioral Health, led three open Q&A sessions for families on anxiety, emotional regulation, ADHD, and social and emotional well-being.

Yinghua Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC)

The Yinghua Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) plays a vital role in strengthening communication, collaboration, and advocacy around special education. SEAC advises the Special Education Department on current issues, program development, and family concerns, creating a positive forum where families, educators, and community members work together to enhance the quality of services for all students. SEAC holds three meetings during the year:

- November 7, 2025 from 12:00-1:00 pm (virtual)
- March 6, 2026, 12:00-1:00 pm (virtual)
- May 2026, 2:30-3:30 pm (in person)

Yinghua Academy Community Association (YACA)

The Yinghua Academy Community Association (YACA) is the school's parent-led organization dedicated to strengthening community engagement and supporting students, teachers, and staff. Although YACA does not hold governance authority, it plays a critical role in advancing the Executive Director's vision of cultivating a nurturing and connected school environment.

Founded by parent volunteers during Yinghua's first year, YACA initially focused on promoting enrollment and raising funds. In 2011, the group incorporated as a Minnesota nonprofit to expand its fundraising capacity. Today, YACA continues to enrich school life by coordinating book fairs, organizing meals for teachers during conferences, supporting classroom volunteers, managing merchandise sales, and leading key fundraising initiatives.

YACA is also the proud founder of Yinghua's International Festival, an event created to celebrate cultural diversity and bring the entire community together. The 2025–2026 school year marked the festival's third year, achieving excellent outcomes in both community building and fundraising.

Friends of Yinghua Academy (FOYA)

Several Yinghua Academy Board members established Friends of Yinghua Academy (FOYA) in 2023 to build long-term financial support for the school. The nonprofit brings together families, alumni, staff, and community members to raise funds that supplement the school's public funding.

During the 2025–2026 school year, FOYA partnered with Yinghua to host the school's 20th anniversary gala. The event raised $230,785 to support Yinghua's long-term goal of providing competitive salaries for teachers and staff.

FOYA holds most of the funds it raises in the Friends of Yinghua Academy Longevity Fund at the Minneapolis Foundation. The Executive Director may submit funding requests for school projects to the FOYA Board. The board's goal is to use investment income to support school priorities while preserving and growing the fund for future needs.

Cook Center Collaboration

With generous support from the community, Yinghua has partnered with the Cook Center for Human Connection. The Cook Center provides staff and teachers with valuable social-emotional well-being resources, including suicide-prevention materials. The partnership also offers parents access to coaching services and online webinars on topics of interest to families.

Alumni

Staying connected with Yinghua graduates has become increasingly important as the alumni community expands and many former students complete their university studies and enter the workforce. Supporting alumni in continuing to develop their Chinese language skills remains an ongoing focus of the school.



Yinghua alumni enjoy a meal together during the event.

Yinghua hosted its fourth Alumni Reunion on January 3, 2026. Approximately 125 alumni registered in advance, and more than 150 alumni attended the event. The program included a school status update from Dr. Lien, icebreaker activities, and a keynote presentation by special guest Catherine Wang Yang on The Power of Connection.

The event also featured Dr. Tu, Associate Director of the University of Minnesota's Chinese Flagship Program, along with Yinghua alumna Ms. Metzdorf, who shared pathways for continuing advanced Chinese language study. Three alumni from the Class of 2017 were excited to share updates on their current pursuits. Alumni expressed appreciation for the opportunity to reconnect and offered suggestions for future events, including additional time for socializing and opportunities to tour the school.

Supporting One Another in Times of Uncertainty

During federal immigration enforcement operations in January 2026, Yinghua's Board of Directors reaffirmed that every member of the school community was valued and that maintaining a safe, welcoming school remained a priority. The board and staff strengthened visitor access and Door 2 pickup procedures, posted notices at school entrances, trained staff on how to respond if approached by government officials, and reinforced safeguards for student information.

Following its January 12 meeting, the Board of Directors invited community members to share their concerns and suggestions during a public comment period. Parents also organized support for families who needed help.

On January 29, nearly 150 teachers, staff, parents, and community members came together for Yinghua's Community Gathering. School leaders shared updates, and participants discussed how families and staff could continue supporting one another and keeping school routines steady for students.



Family, teachers and administrators come together to discuss how to support one another during the time when ICE increased activity in the Twin Cities.

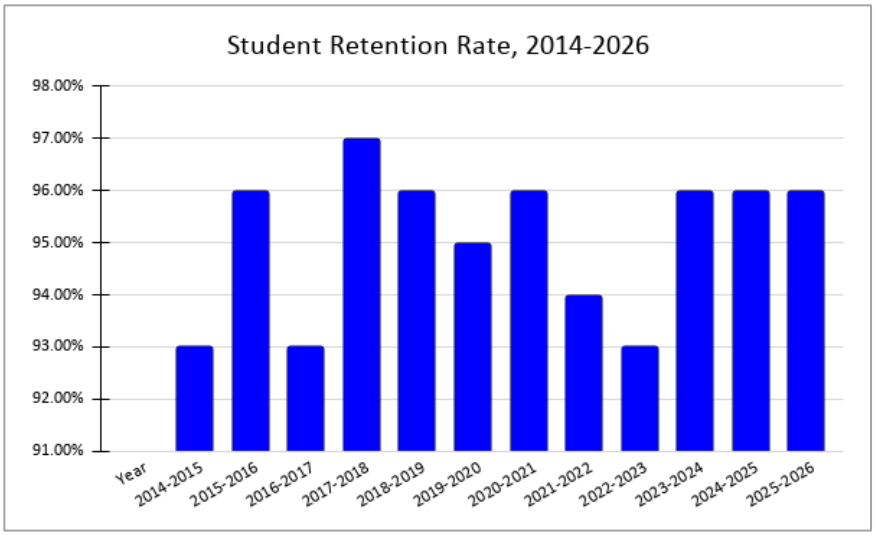
Enrollment, Dissemination of Information, Curriculum and Academic Performance

Enrollment

As a public charter school, Yinghua provides an innovative educational path for all students and is dedicated to offering a tuition-free, open-access, high-quality education. Yinghua follows state statutes governing application and admission procedures for public schools. Enrollment is open to all students residing in any Minnesota school district. Yinghua accepts all applications unless a child does not meet the minimum age requirement for kindergarten. To begin kindergarten in the 2025–2026 school year, a student had to be five years old on or before September 1, 2025.

As of October 1, 2025, Yinghua Academy enrolled 875 students in kindergarten through eighth grade. The school had four homerooms each in kindergarten and first grade and three per grade in grades 2–8. The schoolwide student-to-teacher ratio was 9.9:1, and the annual attrition rate was 4%. See Graph 4 for retention trends over time.

Graph 4 Student Retention, 2014-2026



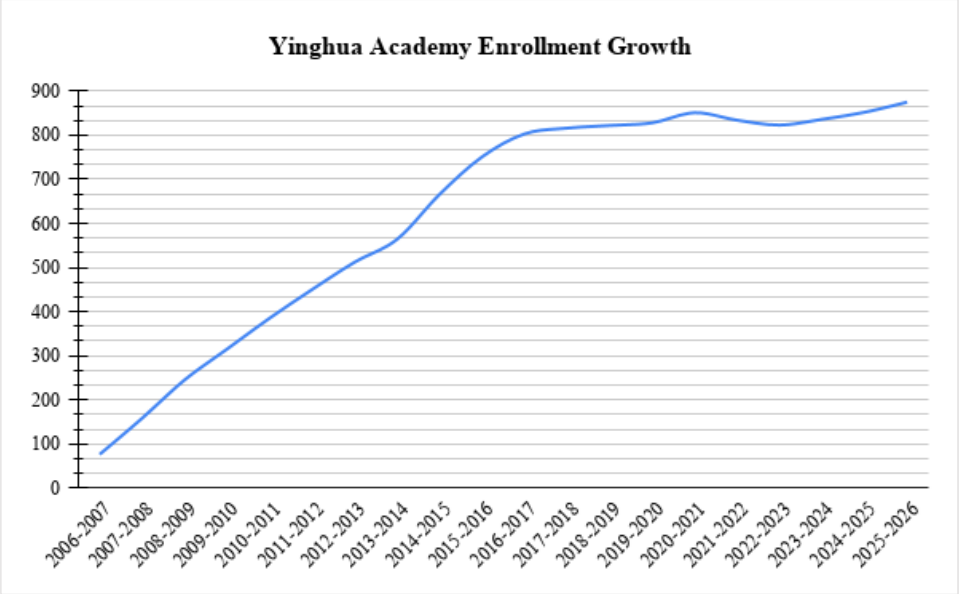
Yinghua opened in the fall of 2006 with 76 students in kindergarten through third grade and grew steadily during its first seven years. Unable to accommodate enrollment demand in 2009, the school moved from its first location in St. Paul to its current facility in Minneapolis on Buchanan Street Northeast.

Enrollment Growth and the 2012–2014 Facility Expansion

In response to increasing demand, a fourth section of kindergarten was added in 2011, and the school operated an offsite kindergarten program for two years while the Buchanan Street campus underwent expansion. In 2012, enrollment capacity was further increased in kindergarten, first, fifth, and sixth grades.

This major construction project significantly enhanced and expanded the facility—adding a new gym, library, and cafeteria; two music rooms; a three-story middle school wing; as well as an art room, special education offices, and a science lab. Yinghua Academy enrollment growth from 2006 to 2026 is shown in Graph 5.

Graph 5 Yinghua Academy Enrollment Growth



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

Enrollment Process

The school posts its application procedures and deadlines on www.yinghuaacademy.org by October 1 and explains the process through public tours and open houses. The Open Enrollment (open application) period for the 2025–26 school year ran from January 8 to February 13, 2025, for matriculation in the fall of 2025.

Enrollment applications are time and date-stamped upon receipt by the school. If more applications are received for a grade than space is available, the school holds a public lottery using a computerized random number generator to yield the list of admitted students and, if needed, a waitlist by grade.

Because the number of applications in 2025 was greater than the Board-approved grade-level capacities, the school held a lottery during a public meeting via Zoom on February 14 at 5:00 - 5:30 p.m. The lottery was well attended by prospective families.

Based on the lottery, some applicants were offered the opportunity to enroll. The other applicants were placed on a waiting list. After the close of Open Enrollment, Yinghua continued to accept applications for all grades; and when there was no space available in a specific grade, the applicant was placed on the waiting list.

Yinghua Academy abides by Minnesota Statutes, section 124E. The school adheres to YA 010 Admissions and Lottery Policy, which outlines, in section 7a-c, that siblings of enrolled students and children of Yinghua staff may receive enrollment preference.

If, during Open Enrollment, the school receives the appropriately completed application of a sibling of a currently enrolled student or child of a Yinghua staff member, the applicant is admitted automatically, so long as there is capacity in the respective grade(s). Preference is not given for any other reason. Applications received after the Open Enrollment period were numbered and responded to in the order in which they were received.

Equity

Continuing into the 2025–2026 school year, Yinghua Academy provided free breakfast and free lunch to all students—regardless of financial need—through Minnesota's Free School Meals Program. The average number of lunches served per day increased from 621 in 2024–2025 to 653 in 2025–2026. Students were encouraged to take breakfast each morning upon arriving at school between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m.

To support the 5% of Yinghua students who are English Language Learners (ELL), the school employs an ELL teacher who provides small-group instruction during the day. This support supplements—rather than replaces—the regular ELA classes offered five times per week in grades 2–8.



Students assembled in the gymnasium

Financial aid is available for families who express the need for help to cover expenses related to field trips, retreats, and other school activities. Aftercare discounts are offered to families who qualify for free or reduced-price meals as well as families who request financial support. Yinghua students wear uniforms. Used uniform sales provide gently used uniform pieces for a suggested donation of $1 per item. Uniform requirements are adjusted as needed to accommodate religious and cultural considerations.

Yinghua did not require families to have Wi-Fi at home during the 2025–2026 school year. Technology support was provided as needed. The school supplied iPads to students who required a device for schoolwork. Every Middle School student receives a 1:1 laptop during the school year.

Yinghua students represented 88 different Twin Cities ZIP codes during the 2025–2026 school year. To support accessibility, the school offered nine bus routes. Busing is free for students residing in Minneapolis and for students outside the city who can travel to a Minneapolis stop.

A core principle of language immersion education is the celebration of diversity. Multilingualism helps students understand the world from multiple perspectives. Homeroom teachers bring the Mandarin proficiency and cultural knowledge needed to deliver the immersion program. The school continues to strive for increased ethnic and socioeconomic diversity in its enrollment; however, change is gradual due to sibling preference (as permitted by Minnesota law) and full enrollment.

Demographics

Yinghua Academy has seen some changes in its enrollment subgroups. In the 2025–2026 school year, Yinghua Academy served a wider community, as reflected in the increase in the number of ZIP codes represented, from 81 to 88, and in the increase in the percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch, from 16% to 18% (see Table 1).

Table 1 Demographics of Yinghua Students: Comparison of 2024–2025 and 2025–2026

	2024–2025	2025–2026
Geography	81 Metro Zip Codes	88 Metro Zip Codes
	58% Minneapolis	51% Minneapolis
	6% St. Paul	6% St. Paul
Ethnicity***	46% Asian Pacific Islander	48% Asian Pacific Islander
	65% Caucasian	64% Caucasian
	11% African American	13% African American
	7% Hispanic/ Latino	7% Hispanic/ Latino
	2% Native American	2% Native American
English Language Learners	9% ELL	5% ELL
	9% Speakers of Chinese	10% Speakers of Chinese
Free and Reduced Lunch Qualified	16%	18%
Special Education	10%	9%

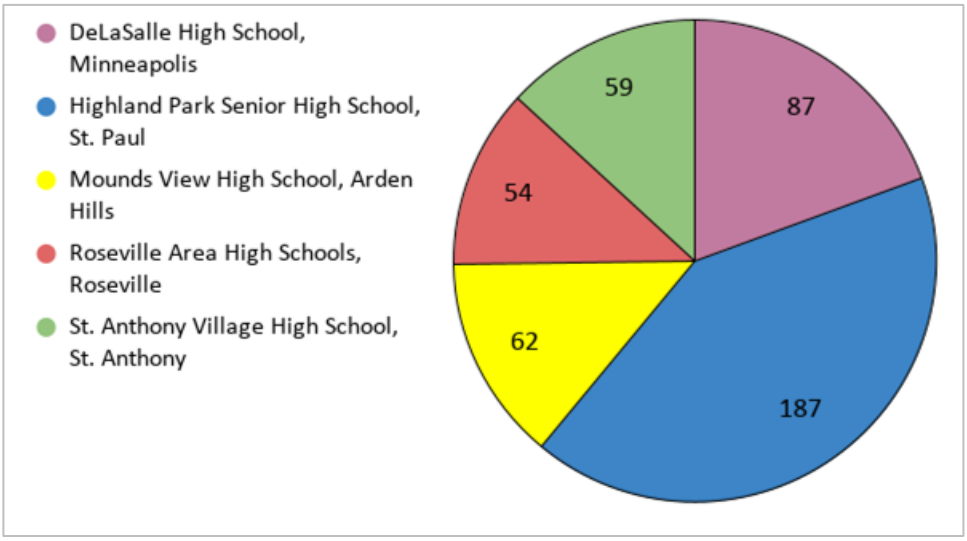
***For demographic information, families self-identify and may select more than one ethnicity for their student. As a result, the total percentage exceeds 100%.

High School and University Placements

Just as Yinghua students hail from dozens of different Twin Cities ZIP Codes, Yinghua graduates go off to attend dozens of different high schools. Over the years, the school's 786 graduates have selected 80 different public, charter, and private schools for their high school education. Highland Park Senior High School (HPSHS) and Yinghua Academy have an agreement which allows Yinghua graduates to attend HPSHS even if they reside outside of the St. Paul Public School District. HPSHS offers Chinese Language Classes to meet students' need at a level that is fitting for Yinghua graduates.

The 71 graduates of the Yinghua Class of 2026 selected the following 17 high schools: Edina High School, Hopkins High School, Saint Thomas Academy, Southwest High School, White Bear Lake Area High School, Woodbury High School, Breck School, East Ridge High School, Irondale High School, Minnetonka Senior High School, Mounds Park Academy, Mounds View High School, St. Paul Academy, DeLaSalle High School, Roseville Area High School, St. Anthony Village High School, Highland Park Senior High School. Graph 6 shows the top high schools attended by all Yinghua graduates.

Graph 6: Top High Schools Attended by All Yinghua Graduates



Higher education institutions attended by Yinghua alumni include Minnesota's Augsburg University, Bethel University, Carleton College, Concordia College (Moorhead), Hamline University, St. Olaf College, and the University of Minnesota. Outside of Minnesota: UC Berkeley (CA), Lewis and Clark College (OR), the University of Chicago (IL), Whitman College (WA), Stanford University (CA), Princeton University (NJ), Purdue University (IN), University of California, Los Angeles (CA), Washington University (WA), University of Connecticut (CT), and Yale University (CT).

Yinghua continues to forge relationships with area high schools so that current families are able to make informed choices. Since 2016 Yinghua has hosted a high school panel of administrators

from area high schools as a way to build connections and expose current families to an array of educational offerings. Graduates also took advantage to acquire study-abroad opportunities as well as scholarship opportunities such as the NSLI-Y.

On December 4, 2025, Yinghua hosted a panel with representatives from eight high schools. Students and families asked questions about academic programs, admissions, and extracurricular activities as they explored options after middle school.

Dissemination of Information

Dissemination of Information (Minn. Stat. § 124E.17, subd. 1(a))
Minnesota law requires charter schools to share program and enrollment information with diverse families and targeted groups. Schools document this outreach in their annual reports, and authorizers consider it in performance reviews.

Compliance with Minnesota Statutes 124E.17

Yinghua typically hosts weekly tours from late September through late May. At December and January public meetings, Yinghua shares information about how to enroll and how to use the offerings of the school. Yinghua uses its website, social media, and flyers to publicize Open Enrollment and the enrollment process.

Yinghua takes seriously its partnership with parents and guardians who are essential to making sure that kindergartners are ready to begin school. Prospective parents of incoming kindergarten students and members of the public tour the school. At a December 9, 2025 open meeting, parents learned about the school and about immersion education practices. A sample immersion class held on January 24, 2026 allowed prekindergarten students and their parents or guardians to experience an immersion classroom.



Activities in the gym for prospective incoming kindergarteners.

At Kindergarten Roundup on April 24, 2026, eighth-grade ambassadors helped welcome incoming students and their families. Families met kindergarten teachers and school directors, learned about transportation, and took photos with Blaze the Dragon. Parents watched as their children, most new to Mandarin, took part in a sample lesson taught entirely in Chinese.

To communicate with and retain enrolled families, the school regularly uses the website, weekly newsletters, and phone, text, and email messaging for updates about conferences, tutoring, homework help, and other events and services to facilitate student success. Teachers communicate with families directly via in-person appointments, email, phone, and written notes regarding project due dates, exam preparation, homework, and grades. Teachers and administrators follow up with parents who missed conferences and with the families of any students with accumulated unexcused absences.

Yinghua Academy participated in the School Finder Fair on January 11, 2026. On November 20, 2025, Yinghua representatives visited the University of Minnesota's Child Development Lab School to share information about the school with families. Yinghua also visited other preschools across Minneapolis as part of its enrollment outreach.

During fall parent–teacher conferences on October 15–16, 2025, Mrs. Magstadt and Ms. Keroff held six Intervention Group Information Sessions for families of students receiving intervention support. Families received an email invitation and could choose the time that worked best for them, as all six sessions covered the same information.

Evening events are offered on special topics that are of interest to Yinghua families. Two annual "What's the Scoop?" events help parents to assist their children with significant school transitions. The first Scoop event is for first grade families who learn about what is expected in formal English Language Arts classes, which begin in second grade.
The second Scoop event is for fourth grade families who learn about Middle School; starting in grade five, students switch classes for classes taught by subject specialists. This represents a significant change from the Lower School model of remaining in one classroom for Chinese, math, science, and social studies lessons taught by one homeroom teacher. Finally, as mentioned in a previous section, Yinghua hosts a high school panel which is open to all students and families.

Curriculum

Yinghua's K–8 academic program is grounded in a rich, standards-based curriculum that draws from the Minnesota State Standards, Common Core Standards, national standards for foreign language education, and the Core Knowledge Sequence. The Core Knowledge Sequence provides a coherent, sequential framework in which each grade level builds intentionally on the knowledge and skills acquired in previous years. While the world continually evolves with new events and technologies, this structured progression ensures that students master a foundation of essential, enduring knowledge.

Under the leadership of Executive Director Dr. Luyi Lien, Yinghua has developed and refined its own customized curriculum. Dr. Lien oversees all aspects of curriculum design to ensure that Mandarin-delivered instruction aligns with both the Core Knowledge Sequence and Minnesota Standards while simultaneously advancing students' Mandarin proficiency. This internally

crafted curriculum has enabled Yinghua students to achieve strong bilingual fluency and deep academic understanding across content areas.

In addition to core academic subjects, Yinghua integrates social-emotional learning and innovative small-group instruction to further support student growth. These practices help ensure that each child receives personalized learning opportunities and develops the skills needed for both academic and personal success.

Chinese Language Arts

Yinghua's Mandarin Chinese immersion program integrates both content-based instruction (CBI) and thematic instructional approaches. The school's full early-immersion model was developed in consultation with the Center for Applied Linguistics and the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition. Yinghua's program is internationally recognized as a strong and dynamic example of immersion best practices. The Chinese Language Arts curriculum encompasses modern and classical literature, informational texts, and the foundational skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Instruction integrates topics from history, social studies, science, and technical subjects. Classical literacy is embedded across all grade levels to strengthen students' linguistic development and deepen cultural understanding. In Middle School, Chinese Language Arts teachers intentionally expand students' exposure to classical Chinese literature to broaden their language proficiency and enhance cultural literacy. Additionally, middle school students receive Chinese Language Arts instruction in smaller groups to help them build Mandarin proficiency and meet content-learning goals.

Math

Yinghua Academy implements Singapore Math, an internationally recognized applied mathematics curriculum that emphasizes deep conceptual understanding. Although mathematics is taught in Chinese at all grade levels, the Singapore Math textbooks and workbooks are in English, allowing parents to more easily support their children at home. The curriculum follows a concrete–pictorial–abstract progression: students first explore concepts using tangible materials, then represent ideas visually, and ultimately apply them using formal mathematical notation.

In Middle School, mathematics is delivered in smaller, mixed-level groups. This research-based approach to flexible grouping is designed to meet students at their individual levels of readiness and promote steady, personalized progress.

English Language Arts

In English Language Arts, Yinghua Academy implements research-based instructional practices aligned with the Science of Reading. In grades 1–4, instruction emphasizes phonics and phonemic awareness, grammar, vocabulary development, and engagement with a variety of

texts, including short stories, novels, nonfiction, poetry, and other primary sources. The program meets the requirements of the READ Act and is structured around Scarborough's Reading Rope, supporting the development of background knowledge, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning, and literacy skills.

To prioritize early Mandarin immersion, Yinghua intentionally delays formal English instruction until grade two, allowing kindergarten and first-grade students to build a strong foundation in Chinese language acquisition. As a result, the English Language Arts curriculum has been carefully designed to support an accelerated "ramp-up," enabling students to make rapid progress once formal instruction begins.

At the Middle School level, the integration of novel studies, essay writing, and project-based learning provides a comprehensive approach to strengthening comprehension, vocabulary, and writing proficiency in both English and Chinese. Novel studies immerse students in complex narratives and themes, enhancing analytical and interpretive skills. Essay writing builds students' capacity to express ideas clearly and logically, fostering critical thinking and the ability to construct sophisticated written work in both languages.

Science

Yinghua Academy's K–8 science curriculum aligns with the Minnesota State Science Standards and the National Research Council's national standards and incorporates Core Knowledge content. Science is taught in Chinese in kindergarten through fourth grade, in both Chinese and English in fifth grade, and entirely in English in grades 6–8.



Students pose with Mrs. Meyer in front of their Science and Technology Expo presentation.

Elementary and middle school teachers work together to ensure that science instruction builds on what students learn at each grade level. Across K–8, students explore the nature of science and technology, the connections between science and engineering, and core concepts in earth, life, and physical sciences.

In Middle School, the science program includes Biology, Ecology, Geology, Meteorology, Astronomy, Chemistry, and Physics. Instruction focuses on both scientific practices and conceptual understanding. Students engage in inquiry-based learning, asking questions informed by hands-on investigations, academic texts, and multimedia resources. They complete research projects, design and conduct experiments, and build scientific knowledge by connecting classroom learning to real-world experiences. Each year, Yinghua hosts a Science and Technology Expo, providing students with opportunities to showcase their learning, deepen their scientific understanding, and strengthen their skills through hands-on exploration.

Social Studies

In Social Studies, Yinghua Academy emphasizes critical thinking, inquiry, and evidence-based understanding of historical events. Students learn to analyze how and why events occurred, consider multiple perspectives, and understand the broader significance of citizenship, government, economics, geography, and history.

In kindergarten through grade five, Social Studies is taught in the Chinese immersion classroom. Teachers address Core Knowledge topics such as the Thirteen Colonies, U.S. presidential biographies, landforms and geographic terminology, European history, and the Inuit and Anasazi cultures. Instruction also includes Chinese historical and geographic studies, including the Qin Dynasty and Emperor Qin Shi Huang; the Han, Tang, and Song Dynasties; the Great Wall; and major Chinese inventions.

In grades six through eight, Social Studies instruction is delivered in both Chinese and English, depending on the unit. Coursework covers a broad range of topics including Chinese history from mythology and the pre-Qin period to modern times; major Chinese philosophers; 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 multiple perspectives; U.S. immigration; the Great Depression; the Sino-Japanese War; World War II and the Holocaust; global citizenship; human impact on the environment; and current events at the local, national, and global levels.

Classes with Specialists

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

Music

Music education is 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. Kindergartners have 50 minutes per week of music; grades one through eight each have two 50-minute periods per week. Every fourth grader makes a music instruction choice—they



Winter Orchestra Concert.

may choose a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, or bass) and receive instruction during music class. Students may also choose vocal music and participate in a choir where professional singing techniques are taught. After fourth grade, students elect to participate in choir, orchestra, or general music and meet twice a week for practice during music class. 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 dizi and hulusi.

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. Kindergartners have two 30-minute periods per week of art while students in grades one through eight each have 50 minutes per week.

Physical Education



The roller-skating unit in PE remains a favorite among Yinghua Students.

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 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 nutrition and healthy choices taught by science and PE faculty in fifth and eighth grades. Kindergartners have two 40-minute classes while all other students enjoy two 50-minute periods.

Technology

Technology is integrated into classroom instruction across grade levels. Middle school students use school-issued laptops to access assignments and readings in Chinese, science, English, and social studies. They also develop keyboarding skills and learn to conduct online research. Across grade levels, Chinese language teachers use web-based tools such as iChinese Reader and Wordwall to support instruction. Students also use technology to connect with peers at sister

schools in China and Taiwan. They share their experiences through messages and video stories, allowing students in different time zones to participate on their own schedules.

Extracurricular Activities

Yinghua Academy offers a rich and diverse array of after-school programs (typically from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on school days) designed to extend learning, deepen student interests, and promote personal growth beyond the regular classroom. These extracurricular offerings are intentionally developed as strategic extensions of the school's mission—not simply as after-school activities. The programs are designed to:

- Reinforce student engagement, curiosity, and creativity beyond the academic day
- Support student well-being through structured, safe after-school environments
- Promote the school's immersion model by integrating language, culture, and community
- Foster balanced development—academic, social, emotional, physical, and creative

These programs are organized into four main categories:

1. Aftercare & Extended Learning – Yinghua's after-school Aftercare Program provides a supervised, fee-based environment where students can choose from *Homework First*, playground time, crafts and games, and structured social interaction. The setting ensures safety while supporting productive use of time and reinforcing student routines.
2. Enrichment Classes – In addition to the core Aftercare offering, Yinghua provides a robust catalog of enrichment opportunities each term. These include nature crafts, chess, theater, dance, sewing, sports, robotics, and more. Classes are taught by school staff, community instructors, and partner organizations.
3. Conservatory of Music – Yinghua's after-school Conservatory of Music offers weekly 30-minute private lessons taught by professional musicians in instruments such as viola, piano, percussion, guitar/ukulele, double bass, and cello. The program culminates in a year-end recital, giving students an opportunity to perform and showcase their growth.
4. Athletics – Yinghua maintains a strong athletics program for students in grades 1–8. In the Lower School (grades 1–4) students participate in in-house sports such as soccer, floor hockey, basketball, track and field, and sports sampler programs. In the Middle School (grades 5–8) students can join competitive teams (travel or home-based) including soccer, volleyball, basketball, cross-country, cross-country skiing, track & field, badminton, and pickleball.

Performances and Events

In addition to Yinghua's annual celebrations of Chinese cultural events such as Lunar New Year, various opportunities are offered to all students to celebrate English proficiency. These events include the annual Battle of the Books, where students create teams to read books and participate in fun trivia-style competition; the Spelling Bee; and Yinghua's Storybook Character Parade, where students and staff dress up as characters from their favorite books to share with the community.

Academic Performance and Charter Contract Goals

In the Charter Contract Goals, "the School" refers to Yinghua Academy. Progress is assessed in part through analysis of academic results data as measured by the Minnesota Department of Education as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA), the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), and the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), along with internationally-recognized Chinese language proficiency exams.

Charter Contract Goals:
1: State Assessment tests
2: Chinese Acquisition
3: Nationally Normed Assessment
4: Ready for School
5: School Culture

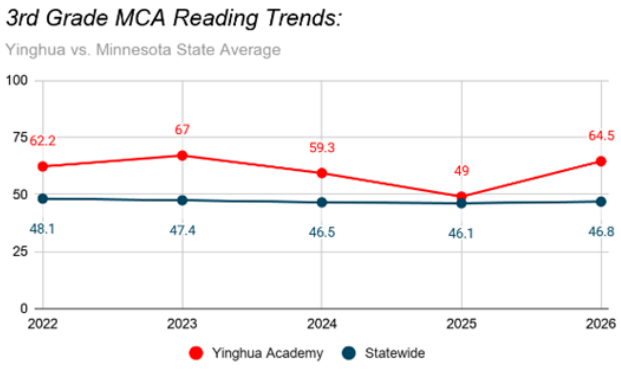
Goal 1: State Assessments

Sub Goal 1.1: Absolute Proficiency

Each year through FY2028, the School's third-grade proficiency rates will be no less than 14 points higher than the state average third-grade reading proficiency rate. In addition, the School's third-grade proficiency rate at the conclusion of FY2028 will be no less than 20 points higher than the state average third-grade proficiency rate.

Results: In SY 2026, 64.5% of Yinghua Academy's third-grade students scored proficient on the MCA Reading assessment, compared with 46.8% of third-grade students statewide. Yinghua's proficienty rate exceeded the state average by 17.7%. See Graph 7.

Graph 7 Third Grade MCA Reading Trends for Yinghua vs. Minnesota State Average

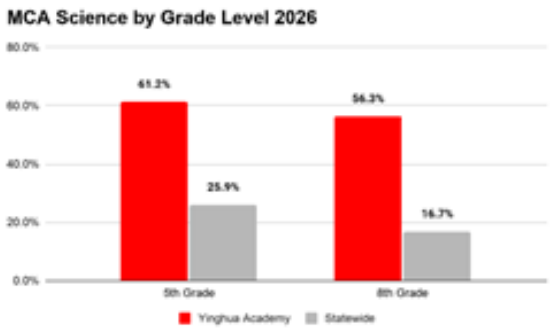


Each year through FY 2028, the school-wide proficiency rates will exceed the state average proficiency rate for the same grades served by the school combined, by at least 20 points in science and reading, and by at least 30 points in math.

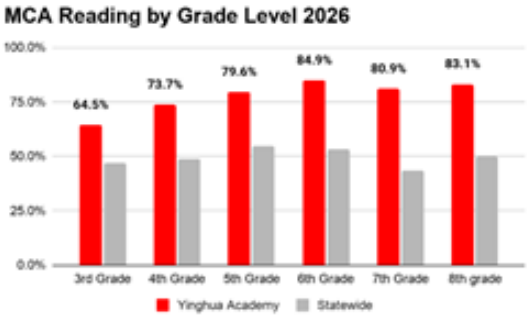
Results: Students **exceeded** this goal in all three subjects. Compared with the state average, Yinghua students scored 37.9 points ahead in science (Graph 8), 27.4 points ahead in reading (Graph 9), and 42.5 points ahead in math (Graph 10).

The School met goal 1.1.

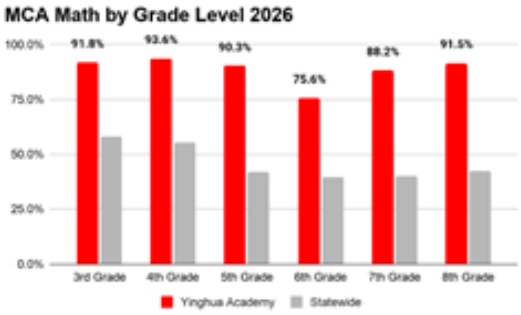
Graph 8 MCA Science by Grade Level 2026



Graph 9 MCA Reading by Grade Level 2026



Graph 10 MCA Math by Grade Level 2026



Sub Goal 1.2: Comparative Proficiency

Each year through FY 2028, the School will demonstrate higher School-wide proficiency rates than:

- the Minneapolis school district, for the same grades served, for each reading, math, and science, and
- the combined average of St. Anthony/New Brighton Public Schools and Minnetonka Public Schools for grades 3-8 in math, grades 5 and 8 in science, and grades 6-8 in reading (to reflect the research-based increase in native language acquisition over time in immersion programs).

Results: Students at Yinghua Academy **out-performed** the combined average of St. Anthony/New Brighton Public Schools and Minnetonka Public Schools for grades 3-8 in math, grades 5 and 8 in science, and grades 6-8 in reading: 16.0% in math, 18.2% in science, and 10.8% in reading. As shown in Graph 11 and Table 2, Yinghua Academy achieved higher

school-wide proficiency rates than the Minneapolis School District in math, reading, and science.

The School met goal 1.2.

Graph 11 2026 Comparative MCA Data

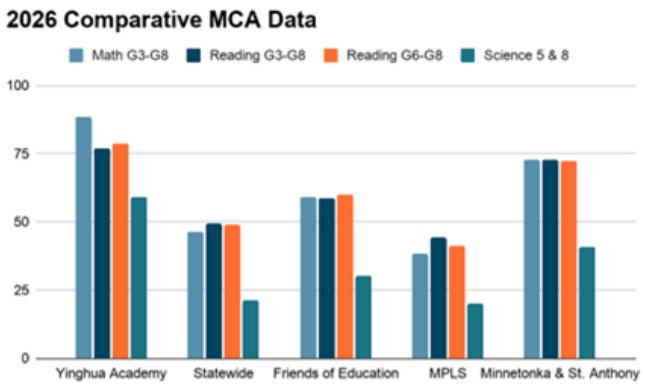


Table 2 2026 Comparative MCA Data

	Math 3-8	Reading 3-8	Reading 6-8	Science 5 & 8
Yinghua Academy	88.7%	76.9%	83.1%	59.2%
Statewide	46.2%	49.5%	49.0%	21.3%
Friends of Education	59.2%	58.9%	59.8%	30.1%
Minneapolis School District	38.1%	44.3%	41.2%	20.0%
Minnetonka and St. Anthony New Brighton	72.7%	72.6%	72.3%	41.0%

Sub Goal 1.3: Growth

At the conclusion of FY2028, the average number of progress points generated by all students based on changes in their achievement levels, for the three highest of the immediately preceding four years, will average no less than 2.75 combined reading and math, as published by the Minnesota Department of Education

Results: The average number of progress points generated by all students based on changes in their achievement levels for FY 2026 exceeded 2.75 in math. Math progress points were 2.8 in FY2026. Reading results were unavailable due to the first implementation of the Reading MCA-IV assessment. State officials emphasized that these results cannot be compared to previous years.

Sub Goal 1.3 measures **combined reading and math growth over multiple years** through FY2028. With comparable reading growth data unavailable for FY2026, the school can report the math result, and overall goal attainment remains undetermined.

Sub Goal 1.4: Achievement Gap

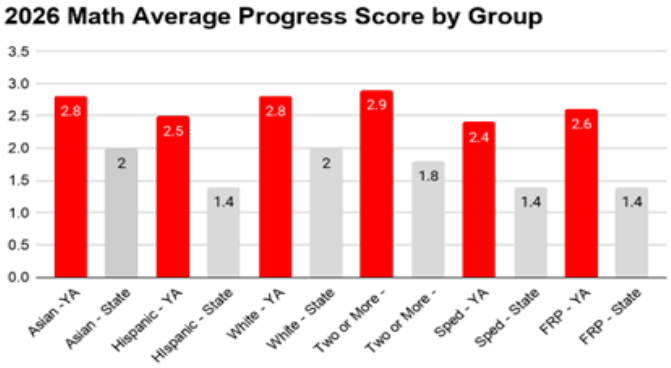
World's Best Workforce Charter Contract Target: All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.

Each year through FY 2028, for each subgroup other than English Learners, for which the School had publicly-reportable/sufficient counts in all the years: the average number of progress points generated by such School student subgroups based on changes in their achievement levels, as published by the Minnesota Department of Education, for each reading and math, for the three highest of FY2025, FY2026, FY2027, and FY2028, will average no less than 2.75.

Results: The subgroups that did not average 2.75 or higher in Math are Hispanic (2.5), SpEd (2.4) and FRP (2.6). All other subgroups in math averaged 2.75 or higher as shown in Graph 12.

The School partially met goal 1.4.

Graph 12 2026 Math Average Progress Score by Group



Reading results were unavailable due to the first implementation of the Reading MCA-IV assessment. State officials emphasized that these results cannot be compared to previous years.

English-Learners: As published by the Minnesota Department of Education, for each year the School has publicly-reportable/sufficient counts of English-Learner students: The School's English Learners will average higher progress towards target than the statewide average, and the School's percentage of English Learners who met or exceeded their targets will exceed the statewide average.

Results: ELL students at Yinghua Academy scored an average of 1.1 points higher in math than the statewide average (Table 3). Reading results were unavailable due to the first implementation of the Reading MCA-IV assessment. State officials emphasized that these results cannot be compared to previous years. Goal met.

The School met ELL goal.

Table 3 2026 ELL Progress Score

ELL Growth Points FY 2026	Math	Reading
State	1.4	N/A
Yinghua Academy	2.5	N/A

Goal 2: Chinese Acquisition

Sub Goal 2.1: Speaking and Listening

Each year through FY 2028, the School will administer a Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA) in at least kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 4th grade, and at least 80% of students will achieve the following proficiency goals:

- Kindergarten: Novice-High
- 2nd grade: Intermediate-Low
- 4th grade: Intermediate-Mid

Results: Met Goal. In the 2025–2026 school year, kindergarten, 2nd – grade and 4th - grade students all met their targets. Kindergarten had a proficiency rate of **84%** achieving the Novice-High proficiency level. 2nd- grade had a proficiency rate of **94%** achieving the Intermediate-Low proficiency level. Lastly, 4th-grade had a proficiency rate of **83%** achieving the Intermediate-Mid or above.

The School met the SOPA goal.

Each year through FY 2028, the School will administer an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) in at least grades 6 and 8, and at least 50% of the students who are continuously enrolled since first grade will achieve the following proficiency levels:

- 6th Grade: Intermediate – Mid and above
- 8th Grade: Advanced – Low and above

Results: In 2025–2026, Yinghua eighth grade students took the OPI and 9.4% (6/64) of them received Advanced-Low proficiency levels or above (Table 4). Of the sixth-grade students that took the OPI in 2025–2026, 93.1% (67/72) received Intermediate-Mid or above proficiency levels (Table 4). The data in Table 4 only included students who fit the criteria that they were continuously enrolled since first grade. It is worth mentioning that of the students who were not continuously enrolled since first grade, and tested in sixth grade, three students received Intermediate-Mid or above proficiency levels.

Table 4 Yinghua Students' Grades 6 and 8 OPI Testing Result Trends, 2021–2026

Grade	OPI Level Goal	Goal	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024–25	2025–26
Grade 6	Intermediate-Mid & Above	50%	98.9%	87.6%	87.8%	90.4%	93.1%
Grade 8	Advance-Low & Above	50%	28.4%	24.1%	34.9%	14.6%	9.4%

The OPI assesses Chinese-language speaking and listening. Among language experts, the OPI is viewed as an ideal tool to assess students' oral proficiency. Yinghua Academy began using this assessment eight years ago to evaluate how older students use

language in real-life situations. In administering the tests, Yinghua follows the Language Testing International (LTI) Protocol for OPI assessment which is a 20 to 30-minute one-on-one interview conducted over the phone between the candidate and an ACTFL-trained and certified examiner. The examiner continuously adapts to the interests and abilities of the student and delves into more complex language while rating the speaker's responses.

Sixth-grade students who took the OPI received a proficiency rating of either Intermediate-Mid or Intermediate-High, while eighth-grade students received a rating of either Advanced-Low or Advanced-Mid. The main distinction between **Intermediate High and Advanced Low** is whether the student can consistently sustain Advanced-level speaking. An Intermediate-High student may demonstrate many Advanced-level skills but have difficulty maintaining them throughout the interview. An Advanced Low student sustains those skills across a range of speaking tasks, even with some hesitation and errors.

A student's rating reflects the level they can sustain consistently. If a student demonstrates higher-level skills but cannot maintain them across the required tasks, the final rating may fall within the lower proficiency level. A single strong response provides only part of the evidence.

For example, a student rated **Intermediate-High** consistently sustained proficiency at that level. Although the exam included Advanced-Low level questions, the student may have answered only some of those questions at the Advanced-Low level while answering the rest of the questions at the Intermediate High level.

A students' rating represents the students' current stage of language development within a continuum of proficiency. The students' ability to respond to some questions at the next proficiency level demonstrates emerging skills and readiness for further advancement. With continuing instruction, practice, and language development, it will be a natural progression for students to demonstrate greater consistency at the higher level and achieve a more advanced proficiency rating on their next OPI assessment.

The School partially met goal 2.1.

Sub Goal 2.2: Reading and Writing

Each year through FY 2028, the School will administer the Youth Chinese Test (YCT) in at least the fifth grade, and at least 80% of fifth grade students will pass YCT Level IV.

Each Year through 2028, the School will administer the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK) in at least grade 8, and at least 80% of the eighth-grade students will pass HSK Level IV.

Result: In 2025–2026, Yinghua Academy expanded its language assessment system by administering the YCT Level IV to all fourth-grade and to fifth- and sixth-grade students

who had not passed the assessment in 2024–2025. This provided additional data to monitor growth in Chinese language proficiency. Of the 103 students tested, 88 (85.4%) passed, exceeding the 80% benchmark.

Among Middle School students, 83.8% of seventh graders and continuing eighth graders who took the HSK Level III passed (57 out of 68). For students taking the HSK Level IV, 66.2% of eighth graders (47 out of 71) achieved passing scores which fell short of the 80% benchmark.

The School partially met goal 2.2.

Goal 3: Nationally Normed Assessment

World's Best Workforce Charter Contract Target: All students are ready for career and college.

Each year through FY 2028, the School will administer NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) at least two times per year to all students enrolled at the time the assessments are administered and who are not formally excused from testing; the NWEA MAP projects ACT College Readiness.

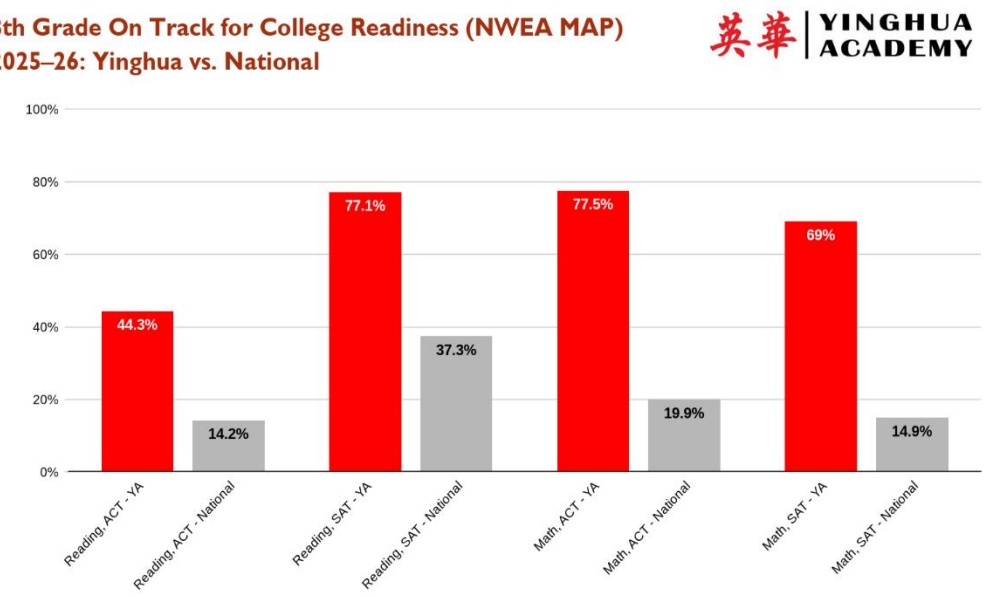
At the conclusion of FY 2028, the percentage of all 8th grade students who took the NWEA MAP assessment and are projected to be college-ready will average no less than 64% in reading and 60% in math for the immediately preceding four years.

Results: The following are the percentages of all 8th grade students who took the NWEA Map assessment and are projected to be college-ready from FY 2026:
Reading: 44.3% On Track (ACT); 77.1% On Track (SAT)
Math: 77.5% On Track (ACT); 69% On Track (SAT)

These results exceed the goal for SAT Reading, ACT Math, and SAT Math. In order to reach the goal of an average of 64% in ACT Reading for the immediately preceding four years, all 8th grade students who take the NWEA MAP assessment and are projected to be college-ready will need to attain an average of 77% in ACT Reading from FY 2027 and FY 2028. It is noteworthy to point out that Yinghua Academy appears well above the national rates on all four measures. Particularly in ACT Reading, Yinghua Academy is at 44.5% whilte the national rate is 14.2% (Graph 13).

The School can still meet goal 3.

Graph 13 Yinghua Academy 8th Grade On Track for College Readiness vs. National 8th Grade On Track for College Readiness



At the conclusion of FY 2028, the percentage of the School students who exhibit growth exceeding the 60th percentile will increase each year in each math and reading. In 2023, 48% of the School students exhibited reading growth exceeding the 60th percentile, and 44% of the School students exhibited a growth rate exceeding the 60th percentile in math.

Result: (FY 2026) Yinghua Academy made steady progress toward its multi-year goal of increasing the percentage of students whose growth exceeds the 60th percentile in both reading and math. Data source: NWEA Achievement Status and Growth Summary Report.

In FY 2026, 53.6% of students exhibited growth exceeding the 60th percentile in reading, an increase from 48% in 2023. In math, 70.5% of students exhibited growth exceeding the 60th percentile, up from 44% in 2023. These gains reflect continued growth across both subjects and indicate that Yinghua remains on track toward meeting the FY 2028 target.

The School can still meet goal 3.

Goal 4: Ready for school

World's Best Workforce Charter Contract Target: All children are ready for school

Each year, 100% of incoming kindergarten students with parental consent will be screened utilizing a kindergarten readiness assessment in their home district.

Result: Yinghua Academy received screening results for incoming kindergarten students whose families provided consent. 100% of parents consented, and all eligible students

were successfully screened through their home district's kindergarten readiness assessment.

The School met goal 4.

Goal 5: School Culture

Sub Goal 5.1 Professional Development

At least 100% of all staff employed for at least one academic year shall receive professional development each year, as demonstrated by school records.

Result: Yinghua Academy met the goal. 100% of staff employed for at least one academic year received professional development, as verified through school training records.

The School met goal 5.1.

Sub Goal 5.2 Attendance

Each year through FY2028, the School will achieve a higher rate of consistent attendance than the state average. Consistent Attendance means students who attend more than 90 percent of the time the student is enrolled.

Result: Yinghua Academy exceeded the goal. Yinghua's overall consistent attendance rate for the 2025–2026 school year was **96.4%**, significantly higher than the **state average of 75.5%**. This demonstrates strong student engagement and consistent attendance well above the statewide benchmark.

The School met goal 5.2.

Sub Goal 5.3 Chinese Culture

Each year through FY2028, 100% of students not previously excused will participate in both the School's Chinese New Year Performance and the spring Chinese Academic performances.

Result: Yinghua Academy met the goal. 100% of students not previously excused participated in both the Chinese New Year Performance and the spring Chinese academic performances, demonstrating full engagement in these core cultural and academic events.

The School met goal 5.3.

Authorizer, Governance, and Management

Authorizer

Friends of Education (Friends) (improveK-12education.org) serves as the authorizer for Yinghua Academy and ten more Minnesota charter schools. Authorizers play an accountability role and provide public oversight for the charter schools they oversee. They do not manage or operate schools, but are responsible for monitoring a school board's oversight of the school. This includes strict financial and academic oversight. By monitoring student testing, conducting site visits, and reviewing annual reports, Friends assesses these three critical areas: academic performance, finance and reporting, and legal compliance. In addition, a common component of Friends' schools is emphasis on foundational skills, critical thinking, data-driven results, and preparation for postsecondary studies.

Contact Friends of Education:
11100 Wayzata Blvd, Suite 800
Minnetonka, MN 55305
www.improveK-12education.org

Governance

As a Minnesota public school, Yinghua operates under state licensure and adheres to all applicable public education requirements. As a charter school, it is governed by an independent School Board, also referred to as a Board of Directors. Yinghua complies with the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, and all meeting dates and details are available on the school's master calendar on the website. Approved School Board meeting minutes are also posted online for public access.

School Board

Yinghua Academy is governed by a distinguished Board of Directors, composed of up to thirteen members elected by the school's parents and staff. During the 2025–2026 school year, the Board included 13 dedicated directors. Collectively, these individuals bring a wealth of experience and insight to their roles and represent one or more of the following constituencies:

- Teacher: A licensed teacher employed by Yinghua Academy.
- Parent/Guardian: A parent or guardian of a student enrolled at the school who is not employed by the school.

- Community Member: An individual who is neither a Yinghua Academy teacher nor a parent/guardian of a currently enrolled student.

In alignment with the academy's bylaws, the Board must always include at least one representative from each of these three groups, ensuring balanced governance and diverse perspectives.

The primary responsibilities of a School Board are to:

- *Establish policy and ensure regular review to support the school's mission and long-term viability.*
- *Work with the executive director and community to develop a shared vision and advocate for students and public education.*
- *Select, support, and evaluate the executive director, ensuring alignment with board policy and professional standards.*
- *Oversee both monthly and long-term financial management to maintain the school's fiscal health.*
- *Ensure effective governance, including a unified board voice, a clear process for addressing complaints, and adherence to legal and ethical standards.*

Meeting Calendar and Minutes

Regular School Board meetings are held in person in Yinghua's Library, fostering thoughtful dialogue and collaborative decision-making. Committee meetings convene via Zoom, and meeting links can be found on the school's Google Master Calendar. For the best virtual experience, we recommend downloading the Zoom app prior to joining; no Zoom account is required. As a public charter school, Yinghua Academy adheres to all transparency requirements. Board meeting minutes are public documents and may be accessed online.

Committees

Each Board member is required to serve on or chair at least one committee. Though committees do not hold decision-making authority under school bylaws, they function as active advisory bodies, conducting research and presenting well-informed recommendations to the Board at its regular meetings. Committee chairs are encouraged to recruit members from the Yinghua parent and teacher community, and in certain cases, may also invite individuals from outside the school when specialized expertise is needed.

All board committee meetings are open to the public, in accordance with the Minnesota Open Meeting Law, except when a meeting or a portion of the meeting is lawfully closed.

Committee Mission Statements

- Development Committee: Develop a long-term fundraising plan, cultivate prospects, and provide oversight for the school's two annual giving campaigns (Fall Fundraiser and Red Envelope) in partnership with the CEO/Executive Director and YACA (Yinghua Academy Community Association).
- Finance/Facilities Committee: 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 including facility planning and maintenance.
- Governance Committee: 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.
- HR/Personnel Committee: Assist the Yinghua School Board and the CEO/Executive Director in ensuring that Yinghua's human resource policies and practices (including, but not limited to, compensation, benefits, and school culture) support Yinghua's ability to recruit, hire, and retain high-quality teachers and staff.

School Board Elections

Yinghua holds annual School Board elections in the spring. Each parent and legal guardian of a child currently enrolled at Yinghua, each current employee of the school, and each current Yinghua board member is eligible to vote. Per the bylaws, nominations are solicited at least 60 days before the election period opens. Nominations come from teachers, parents and guardians, and community members. Newly elected board members are seated to the board on July 1.

Elected members and volunteers serving on committees each have a school email address for board and school-related communication. Board and board committee email addresses follow this pattern:

firstname.lastname@yinghuaacademy.org. Biographies of board members can be found on the Yinghua website at yinghuaacademy.org/about/board-of-directors/board-members.

2025–2026 School Board Election Timeline

- March 19: Governance Committee issues the call for candidates (60 days prior to the election).
- April 14: Deadline to file as a candidate.
- May 15: Board Meeting with candidate introductions at 5:15 p.m. Videos of the candidate speeches are made available to the school community.

- May 15: Ballots will be available. Voting may be completed electronically or in person at the school from May 15 to May 22.
- May 22: Voting closes at 6:00 p.m.
- May 23: Results announced to the public.
- July 1: New board members are seated once training is complete; three-year term begins.

The 2025–2026 Yinghua Academy School Board included nine parent members. Colleen Ebinger served as Board Chair, and Chris Klisch served as Treasurer. The other parent members were Bryan Huang, Ying Zhang, Paul Landahl, Jessica Griffin, Brian Strahan, Catherine Wang Yang, and Trupti Storlie. The two community members were Yinglu Zeglin, who served as Secretary, and Cindy Moeller. The two licensed teacher members were Bradly Byykkonen (license #434391) and Pamella Stommes (license #490550).

Monthly Board Meeting Attendance

The attendance rates of School Board Members at the School Board Meetings are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5 *2025–2026 Attendance Rates of School Board Members at School Board Meetings*

Jul	*Aug*	*Sept*	*Oct*	*Nov*	*Dec*	*Jan*	*Feb*	*Mar*	*April*	*May*	*June*
N/A	*100%*	*77%*	*85%*	*77%*	*92%*	*85%*	*100%*	*92%*	*92%*	*85%*	*92%*

Management

Yinghua Academy Leadership Team Structure

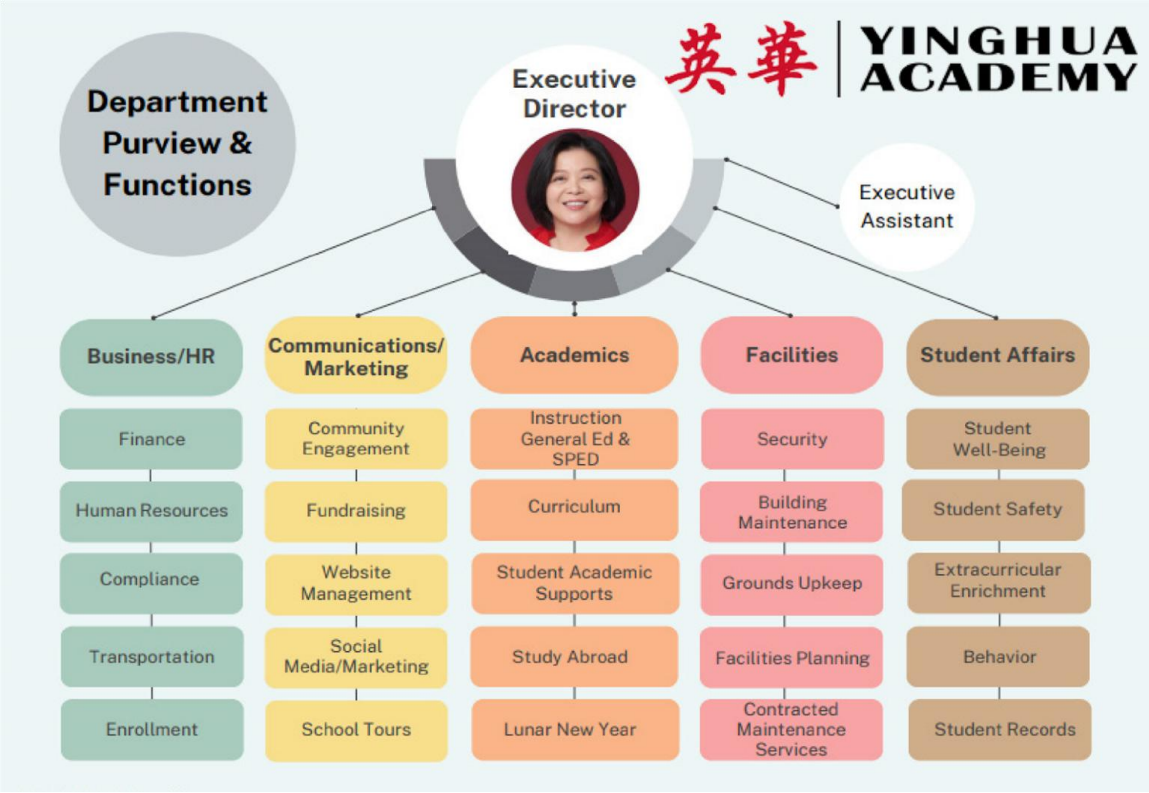
Yinghua Academy's leadership structure has continued to evolve under Dr. Lien's guidance and is designed to ensure strong governance, efficient operations, and high-quality teaching and learning across all grade levels. The leadership team is organized into five key functional areas—Academics, Student Affairs, Business/HR, Communications & Marketing, and Facilities & Transportation—each led by directors or coordinators who report directly to the Executive Director (Figure 1).

These five departments form the core pillars of Yinghua Academy's organizational operations. While each area carries distinct responsibilities, they work in close collaboration, creating an integrated system that supports the whole child. Together, the departments uphold a shared commitment to student well-being, academic excellence, and a strong, inclusive school community.

The 2025–2026 school year marked the second full year of implementing the formally restructured leadership model. This new structure enhanced collaboration, clarified roles and responsibilities, and fostered a strong sense of collective purpose. Through aligned goals,

shared decision-making, and consistent role modeling, the leadership team strengthened community belonging and set a positive example for students, staff, and the broader Yinghua community.

Figure 1 *2025–2026 Organizational Chart: Newly Restructured Departments and Teams*



Academic and Student Development Leadership Team

Yinghua Academy's Academic and Student Development Leadership Team includes the Executive Director, Academic Directors, Special Education Coordinator, and Student Behavior and Family Liaison. The Executive Director reports to the School Board, oversees school operations, and guides the implementation of the school's mission and policies.

The team works together to strengthen instruction, respond to students' needs, and support their academic growth and social-emotional well-being.

Luyi Lien, Ph.D. 连校长 (Lien Xiaozhang), CEO/Executive Director



Dr. Luyi Lien, Executive Director at Yinghua Academy, has been an integral part of the school since its inception in 2006. Her journey at Yinghua Academy spans a myriad of roles, including classroom teacher, curriculum writer, textbook author, and Academic Director.

Before joining Yinghua, Dr. Lien was a published author and essayist in her native country, Taiwan. With an unwavering commitment to excellence, Dr. Lien's remarkable 20-year tenure has played a pivotal role in shaping Yinghua's robust immersion curriculum.

Dr. Lien works to provide exceptional educational opportunities that balance academic rigor with the well-being of the whole child. She develops innovative programs that broaden students' perspectives and help them learn to work effectively with others.

Dr. Lien is internationally recognized for her work in immersion education. She has spoken at the National Chinese Language Conference (NCLC), ACTFL, and STARTALK conferences and has been invited to speak in China, Taiwan, Singapore, and Canada. She advises new immersion schools on curriculum development and serves on the advisory boards of several language education organizations. At Yinghua Academy, her collaborative leadership pairs academic excellence with student well-being and joy in learning.

Fang Wu, 吴主任 (Wu Zhuren), Middle School Chinese Academic Director



Wu Zhuren has served the Yinghua Academy community for more than 17 years. A graduate of Tianjin Normal University, she taught second grade at Yinghua for 11 years before moving to middle school.

As Middle School Academic Director, Wu Zhuren mentors teachers and works with Dr. Lien and the academic leadership team to strengthen instruction. She values the partnership between teachers and families in helping students develop a love of Chinese and gain the confidence to use it on stage.

Lori Magstadt, English Academic Director



Lori Magstadt, Yinghua Academy's English Academic Director, brings a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to authentic student learning. She holds a Master's degree in English as a Second Language from Hamline University and a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. Throughout her career, she has served in roles such as Learning and Development Specialist at Imagine Learning and as a founding educator and academic leader at Cologne Academy. Her work as an Educational Consultant further strengthened her expertise in standards-based assessment, curriculum design, and instructional development. Mrs. Magstadt is dedicated to supporting teachers, elevating instructional quality, and ensuring that students receive a rich and engaging educational experience at Yinghua Academy.

Shu-Mei Lai 賴主任 (Lai Zhuren), Lower School Chinese Academic Director



Shu-Mei Lai has devoted more than twenty years to education, inspiring students with her enthusiasm, compassion, and commitment to high-quality learning. Since joining Yinghua Academy in 2008 as a third-grade teacher, she has nurtured a love of learning in her students and later expanded her impact by teaching seventh and eighth graders during formative years of their growth. Over time, she has served as a team lead, curriculum developer, mentor, and instructional coach, strengthening instructional practices and supporting teacher development. As the Lower School Chinese Academic Director, Ms. Lai believes every child deserves a rigorous and caring education. She works closely with teachers to enhance curriculum, integrate academic and social-emotional learning, and deepen students' engagement with Chinese language and culture. Dedicated to educational excellence and continual growth, she also cherishes time with her family and enjoys nature, reading, and gardening.

Sherry Edwards, Student Development and Family Liaison



Ms. Edwards (Ms. E) has been a valued member of the Yinghua Academy staff since 2019. A former elementary teacher with experience teaching grades 4 through 7, she brings a deep passion for working with children and empowering them to succeed. She supports students in developing self-discipline, making positive choices, and feeling understood with her compassion and kindness. Ms. Edwards led the Yinghua Aftercare Program for four years before transitioning into her current role as Student Development and Family Liaison. In this role, she works closely with students to transform challenging behaviors into meaningful learning opportunities and partners with families to provide guidance and support. As Yinghua's building safety officer, she also oversees the planning and implementation of all fire and lockdown drills throughout the school year, ensuring a safe and well-prepared school environment.

Professional Growth and Leadership Development Plan

In Minnesota, charter school leaders who do not hold an administrative license are required to include their professional development plans in the school's annual report. Presented below is the professional development plan that the Executive Director followed during the 2025–2026 school year.

Dr. Lien's Annual Goals – Executive Director Leadership Development

Goal 1. Executive Leadership Development
Participate in leadership workshops offered by the Center for Creative Leadership and demonstrate how at least two new leadership strategies are applied at Yinghua Academy.

Goal 2. Professional Networking and Collaboration
Participate regularly in weekly Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS) Executive Director meetings and biweekly meetings with Executive Directors of schools authorized by Friends of Education (FoE). Share relevant insights with Yinghua's leadership team.

Goal 3. Internal Leadership Capacity Building
Identify and mentor emerging leaders within Yinghua Academy, provide leadership development opportunities, and strengthen delegation and shared decision-making.

2025–2026 Executive Director Annual Goals and Results

Dr. Lien met all three annual goals by applying new leadership strategies to school operations, collaborating regularly with fellow executive directors, and developing leadership capacity within Yinghua Academy.

Goal 1. Executive Leadership Development
Goal. Participate in leadership development and apply at least two new leadership strategies at Yinghua Academy.

> **Result — Met.** Dr. Lien completed the weeklong Leadership Development Program at the Leadership Development Institute at Eckerd College, held March 9–13, 2026. She completed a 360-degree leadership assessment and participated in individual coaching. She applied two strategies in her work at Yinghua. She used the Direction, Alignment, and Commitment (DAC) model to assess how well teams understood shared priorities, coordinated their work, and committed to following through. She also applied techniques for giving more effective feedback.

Goal 2. Professional Networking and Collaboration
Goal. Participate in weekly meetings with fellow executive directors through the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS) and meet with Friends of Education (FoE) every two weeks.

> **Result — Met.** Dr. Lien participated in weekly online meetings with fellow executive directors through the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS) and met with Friends of Education (FoE) every two weeks. Through these meetings, she exchanged ideas on school operations, stayed informed about new legal requirements and how to implement them, and discussed ways to support school leaders' well-being.

Goal 3. Internal Leadership Capacity Building
Goal. Mentor emerging leaders and create opportunities for staff and administrators to take ownership of initiatives and participate in decision-making.

> **Result — Met.** Dr. Lien mentored emerging leaders and established separate biweekly meetings for the leadership and administrative teams. The meetings gave each team time to coordinate priorities, address shared challenges, and take ownership of decisions and initiatives. She created opportunities for teachers and staff to lead, listened to their feedback, and supported them as they took on new responsibilities. She also organized a leadership retreat to help team members develop their leadership skills and apply new strategies to their work.



The 2025-2026 Leadership team poses in front of the school.

Professional Outreach and Presentations

During the 2025–2026 school year, Dr. Lien led Academic team to speak at several professional seminars and conferences. She used these opportunities to highlight Yinghua Academy's leadership in immersion education and often invited academic directors and teachers to co-present. Key presentations included:

- On August 29, 2025, Dr. Lien, Mrs. Shumei Lai, and Mrs. Fang Wu, together with MS math team lead Pamella Stommes and 4th-grade team lead Li Cheng, presented《好的开始：为全年的教学做计划》(A Good Start: Planning for a Successful School Year) as part of the American Academy of International Culture and Education (AAICE) 2025 Fall Professional Development Series. The session attracted over 200 teachers and language professionals from around the world, highlighting Yinghua's leadership and contributions to the field of Chinese language education.
- From November 14-15, 2025, Dr. Lien presented at the annual conference of the Minnesota Council on the Teaching of Languages and Cultures (MCTLC). The theme was "Language of All, Language for All: Advocating for Language Education." The theme emphasized equitable access to multilingual learning for all students. Dr. Lien invited Academic Directors Shu-Mei Lai and Lori Magstadt to co-present a session titled, "Building Global Bridges: Fostering International Connections in the Classroom." The presentation explored how immersion education can create culturally rich environments that support students' language development, celebrate diversity, and build meaningful global connections.
- On November 21, at the ACTFL 2025 Convention in New Orleans, Dr. Lien led a team of three—Lower School Academic Director Shu-Mei Lai (Lai Zhuren), Middle School Teacher Shu-Ho Wang (Wang Laoshi), and herself—to present "Promoting Language Development with Engaging Interactive Activities." This session showcased Yinghua Academy's collaborative work in designing interactive, student-centered activities that strengthen immersion goals and create supportive, engaging classroom environments. These strategies help students become active, confident, and successful language

learners. The presentation drew more than 100 attendees and received overwhelmingly positive feedback. Participants shared their admiration for the Yinghua team and commended the school as an exemplary leader in immersion education.

Staffing

The Yinghua teaching staff is selected using a three-tiered process. The first step is an interview with the hiring committee. Next, the candidate teaches 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's full-time and part-time staff totaled 133 in the 2025–2026 school year, with a student-to-teacher ratio of 9.9:1. Licensed teacher retention between the 2025–2026 school year and the year of this report was 83%.

Yinghua's teachers and educational staff participate in three performance reviews each school year. They submit weekly lesson plans to the Academic Directors, forming the foundation for collaborative curriculum development across grade levels. Teachers also engage in weekly planning meetings with their grade-level and subject-area teams to coordinate instruction and strengthen alignment.

All Yinghua teachers are either fully licensed or actively progressing toward licensure, meeting state requirements for public educators. Every staff member participates in professional development, and 62% of teachers hold advanced degrees, including three with doctoral degrees. Of the 69 teachers, 67 served in full-time roles. In addition, 18 instructional support staff—such as interventionists, educational assistants, and special education paraprofessionals—contributed to the learning environment. Yinghua also employed 22 full-time and 20 part-time non-teaching staff members. For the 2025–2026 school year, the school had four administrators. The licensed teacher retention rate last year was 83%, influenced by a variety of employment-related factors, with a five-year average retention rate of 82.6%.

To review staffing data, click the link to find sheets with full-time and part-time teaching assignments and related data:

Full-time and Part-time Teaching Assignments and Related Data

Financial Performance

The school's long-standing budget creation process is deliberate and methodical. Yinghua takes a conservative approach to budget development and implementation.

Budget creation

The budget creation process begins in the winter of the prior year when the Executive Director, the Business/HR Manager, and the school's financial management services group, CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA), propose a budget for the following year. Input from other administrators and teaching staff is collected and prioritized for inclusion during the budget creation process. Consideration is given to academic and operational needs. CLA prepares projections of enrollment and expenses.

The budget then undergoes a thorough review and vetting through the Finance and Facilities Committee to develop and address any questions and concerns. Questions and concerns are addressed as changes are incorporated into the draft budget, and a draft is presented to the full Board for review and approval based upon the recommendation of the Finance and Facilities Committee. The Board provides suggestions before the final budget is approved in the spring for the following fiscal year.

Implementation of the Board-approved budget

The Executive Director, together with the school's Business/HR Manager, implement the Board-approved budget for the year. School administrators engage the help of CLA to ensure that projected revenues meet budget expectations. The Executive Director exercises prudent discretion to execute the budget and has authority to manage expenses within 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. The Executive Director authorizes all expenses, the Board Treasurer reviews and approves them, and CLA makes payments. This creates a separation of duties among these parties. The school maintains a close working relationship with CLA while executing the budget. The Treasurer and the Finance and Facilities Committee works closely with school administrators and CLA to ensure a successful financial year.

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 presents a monthly update at each regularly scheduled Board meeting, providing transparency to the School Board, staff, and community. Yinghua provides copies of public documents to fulfill regulatory and contractual obligations to any interested external entities.

Fiscal Year 2025–2026

The audited FY2025 books showed a fund balance of 26% (Table 6) of expenditures and the unaudited FY2026 books forecast a fund balance of 26% (Table 7).

Yinghua Academy continued normal operations during fiscal year 2026, with increases in both revenues and expenditures primarily reflecting student enrollment growth from FY25 to FY26. The Food Service Fund experienced relatively stable activity compared to the prior fiscal year. The Community Education Fund saw a decrease in activity, primarily due to lower participation in the Study Abroad program.

The General Fund experienced the largest increase in expenditures, driven primarily by staffing and benefits, contracted services, and marketing. Increased staffing and benefits costs were attributable to higher insurance premiums and employer contribution rates, as well as additional staffing needed to support increased student enrollment. Contracted services increased due to additional substitute services to cover staff leaves and expanded Special Education services related to an increase in student IEPs. Marketing expenditures were higher primarily due to a one-time expense associated with Yinghua Academy's 20th Anniversary celebration.

Table 6 is a comparison of the General Fund (FD 01) balance percentage from fiscal year 2021-2022 to fiscal year 2026–2027. The fiscal year 2025–2026 percentage is currently unaudited with the audit report being unavailable at the time this report was completed. The fiscal 2026–2027 general fund balance percentage is a projection based off of the approved budget.

Table 6 General Fund (FD 01) Balance History

FY2021-2022	FY2022-23	FY2023-24	FY2024–25	FY2025–26	FY2026-27
Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited	Unaudited	Projected
25%	30%	29%	26%	26%	25%

Table 7 shows the current fiscal year 2025–2026 unaudited Balance Sheet for all Funds excluding the Affiliated Building Company. The audit report was unavailable at the time this report was completed.

Table 7 Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2026 (unaudited)

	Description	
Assets	Cash	$2,350,815
	Accounts Receivable	$97,121
	State Aid Receivable	$1,474,865
	Federal Aid Receivable	$161,789
	Prepaid Expenses and Deposits	$80,422
	Prior Year State Receivables	$0
	Due from Other Funds	$62,208
Total Assets		$4,227,220
Liabilities	Salaries and Wages Payable	$540,595
	Line of Credit	$0
	Accounts Payable	$409,869
	Payroll Deductions and Benefits Payable	$147,471
	Unearned Revenue	$10,290
Total Liabilities		$1,108,224
Fund Balance		**$3,118,996**

Table 8 shows the current fiscal year 2025–2026 unaudited Statement of Revenue and Expenditures for all Funds excluding the Affiliated Building Company. The audit report was unavailable at the time this report was completed.

Table 8 Statement of Revenue and Expenditures for all Funds

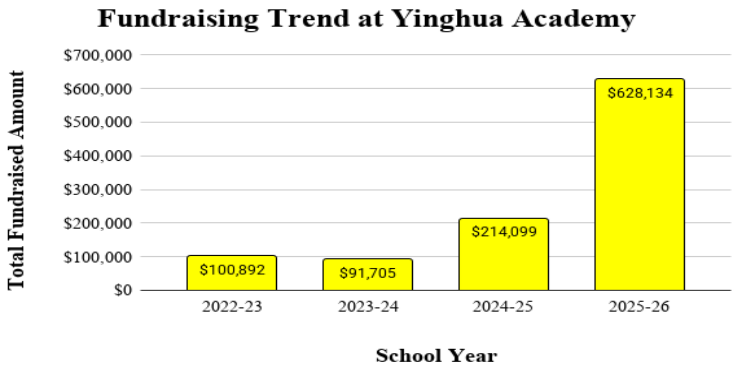
	Description	Un-Audited
Revenues	State Revenues	$10,322,629
	Federal Revenues	$95,570
	Other Revenues	$1,032,464
	Donations and Gifts	$296,265
	Food Service	$740,394
Total Revenues		$12,487,322
Expenditures	Salaries and Benefits	$7,136,476
	Building Lease and Operating Expenses	$1,303,488
	Programming, General Administrative	$2,631,635
	Food Service	$735,142
	Community Service (Yinghua Care)	$779,849
Total Expenditures		$12,586,590
Surplus (Deficit)		$(99,268)
Fund Balance	Beginning Fund Balance	$3,218,264
	Committed Fund Balance	
	Add Surplus (Deficit)	
Ending Fund Balance		$3,118,996
Combined Fund Balances Percentage		25%

Fundraising

Throughout the 2025–2026 school year, the School Board, Dr. Lien, and Corey Magstadt led Yinghua Academy's fundraising efforts. Their approach combined transactional fundraising to meet specific, immediate needs with transformational fundraising to build long-term philanthropic support through Friends of Yinghua Academy (FOYA) and other initiatives aligned with the school's mission.

Yinghua's strategic plan calls for a 10% annual increase in fundraising. In 2025–2026, Yinghua Academy and FOYA raised **$628,134** in pledges and cash receipts, up approximately **193%** from **$214,099** in 2024–2025 (see Graph 14). Major fundraising events, including Yinghua's 20th anniversary gala, and successful grant applications contributed to the increase. YACA fundraising is reported separately.

Graph 14 Fundraising Trend at Yinghua Academy from 2022 through 2026.



Future Plan

Future Priorities for Yinghua Academy

1. Develop the next strategic plan. Yinghua Academy will engage the school community in developing a strategic plan for the next three to five years. Community input will help identify which Mandarin immersion practices to sustain and where to strengthen curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The planning process may also explore how Yinghua can share what it has learned through its Mandarin immersion and cultural education programs with other immersion educators.

2. Assess building capacity and use of space. The Board of Directors and school leadership team will review how Yinghua uses its facilities and how many students the building can support. The review will consider space for classroom and small-group instruction, student services, and indoor recess during the winter. The findings will guide decisions about enrollment and future facility needs.

3. Strengthen student belonging and well-being. Feedback from student and family surveys will guide Yinghua's work on school belonging, social and emotional learning, and mental health. Yinghua will prioritize helping students build trusting relationships with peers and adults, strengthening classroom practices that foster belonging, and making support easier for students and families to access.

4. Build lasting support for competitive compensation. Yinghua will strengthen its partnership with Friends of Yinghua Academy (FOYA) and build a dependable base of recurring donations to help address the charter school funding gap. The long-term goal is to increase and sustain competitive compensation so Yinghua can attract and retain teachers and staff who support its Mandarin immersion mission.

Additional Reports and Policies

2025–2026 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report

Each Minnesota school district and charter school is required to set goals related to each component of the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness framework, formerly known as the World's Best Workforce, and to report its progress toward those goals using data and brief narratives.

Yinghua Academy's achievements, strategies, goals, and results from the 2025–2026 school year are summarized in the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report, in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11. The Yinghua Academy School Board approved this report for submission to the Minnesota Department of Education on November 16, 2026.
The Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report is also published as a section of the annual report on the school's website: www.yinghuaacademy.org > About Us > School Management.



Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness (CACR) Annual Summary Report

Please use this template as an internal tool to gather information. Responses should be submitted electronically in the **Minnesota Education Grant System** (MEGS). You can copy your responses from this template into MEGS.

If your district or charter does not utilize Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) funds and complete ESEA reporting within MEGS, please submit an electronic copy of this form to **CACR.MDE@state.mn.us**.
District or Charter Name: Yinghua Academy
CACR Contact Name: Dr. Luyi Lien
CACR Contact Title: CEO/Executive Director
CACR Contact Email: luyi.lien@yinghuaacademy.org
CACR Contact Phone Number: (612)788-9095

Annual Public Meeting

These annual public meetings are to be held in the fall of each school year.
CACR Requirement: For each school year, the school board must publish a report in the local newspaper, by mail or by electronic means on the district website.
Provide the direct website link to the district's CACR annual report. If a link is not available, describe how the district disseminates the report to families and community partners:
https://www.yinghuaacademy.org/ourteamadministration/school-management/

Survey(s) of Staff, Students, and Families

CACR Requirement: Each school district must periodically survey affected constituencies, in their home language(s) where appropriate and practicable, about their connection to and level of satisfaction with school.

Summarize the results of your most recent survey(s) of staff, students, and families:

2026 School Climate Survey Results: Yinghua Academy's May–June 2026 school climate survey received 672 responses from 324 students in grades 5–8, 93 staff members, and 255 parents and guardians. Participation reached 98.5% among eligible students and 69% among staff. The family survey was offered in five languages.

Survey group	Key findings	Areas for improvement
Students	**75%** reported being happy or very happy at Yinghua, and **68%** said friendships and the school community mattered most to them. Students reported high participation in academic, cultural, athletic, arts, and community events. Popular events included Lunar New Year performances, Grandparents Day, Field Day, and the International Festival.	School lunch was the most common concern, followed by homework and workload, then testing.
Families	**93%** were satisfied with their family's experience. Families valued Yinghua's close-knit community and cited Mandarin immersion and strong academics as leading reasons for choosing the school. Among respondents with a Yinghua graduate in high school, **94%** said their child was well or extremely well prepared.	Families called for clearer communication, stronger support for student well-being and belonging, and improvements to activities, events, and aftercare.
Staff	Staff highlighted supportive leadership, teamwork, and strong relationships with colleagues. They reported feeling valued and respected in their roles and said that Yinghua's Mandarin immersion	Compensation and benefits were the leading areas for improvement. Staff also asked for more professional development opportunities.

	program and school mission aligned with their beliefs about education.	

Yinghua will continue to build on these strengths by enhancing communication, celebrating community engagement, and fostering even stronger connections among families, staff, and students.

Goals and Results

All Students Ready for School

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established SMART goal for the 2025–26 School Year. Each year, 100% of incoming kindergarten students with parental consent will be screened utilizing a kindergarten readiness assessment in their home district.	Provide the result for the 2025–26 School Year that directly ties back to the established goal. Yinghua received the results of 100% of Early Childhood Screenings completed by incoming kindergarteners with parental consent.	*Check one of the following:* _X_ Goal Met (one-year goal)

Close the Achievement Gap(s) Between Student Groups

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established SMART goal for 2025–26 School Year. Each year through FY2028, for each subgroup other than English Learners, for which the School had publicly-reportable / sufficient counts in all the years: the average number of progress points generated by such School student subgroups based on changes in their achievement levels, as published by the Minnesota Department of Education, for each reading and math, for the three highest of FY2025, FY2026, FY2027, and FY2028, will average no less than 2.75.	Provide the result for the 2025–26 School Year that directly ties back to the established goal. Only the following subgroups did not average 2.75 or more on the average number of progress points: <u>Math</u> Hispanic: 2.5 SpEd: 2.4 Free and Reduced: 2.6 Reading results were unavailable due to the first implementation of the Reading MCA-IV assessment. State officials emphasized that these results cannot be compared to previous years.	*Check one of the following:* ___ Goal Met (multi-year goal) ___ Goal Not Met (multi-year goal) _X_ On Track (multi-year goal) ___ Not On Track (multi-year goal)

Results: All subgroups for math averaged 2.75 or higher except Hispanic (2.5), SpEd (2.4), and FRP (2.6).

2026 Progress Points - Math	Yinghua	Statewide
Asian	2.8	2
Hispanic	2.5	1.4
White	2.8	2
Two or More	2.9	1.8
SpEd	2.4	1.4
FRP	2.6	1.4

Close the Achievement Gap(s) Between Student Groups

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established SMART goal for 2025–26 School Year. English-Learners: As published by the Minnesota Department of Education, for each year the School has publicly-reportable/sufficient counts of English-Learner students: The School's English Learners will average higher progress towards target than the statewide average, and the School's percentage of English Learners who met or exceeded their targets will exceed the statewide average.	Provide the result for the 2025–26 School Year that directly ties back to the established goal. English-Learners at Yinghua Academy averaged 1.1 points higher than the state in math. Reading results were unavailable due to the first implementation of the Reading MCA-IV assessment. State officials emphasized that these results cannot be compared to previous years.	*Check one of the following:* _X__ Goal Met (multi-year goal) ___ Goal Not Met (multi-year goal) ___ On Track (multi-year goal) ___ Not On Track (multi-year goal)

Results: ELL students at Yinghua Academy averaged 1.1 points higher in math than the statewide average. Reading results were unavailable due to the first implementation of the Reading MCA-IV assessment. State officials emphasized that these results cannot be compared to previous years.

ELL Growth Points FY 2026	Math	Reading
State	1.4	N/A
Yinghua Academy	2.5	N/A

All Students Ready for Career and College

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established SMART goal for the 2024–25 School Year. At the conclusion of FY2028, the percentage of all 8th grade students who took the NWEA MAP assessment and are projected to be college-ready will average no less than 64% in reading and 60% in math for the immediately preceding four years.	Provide the result for the 2025–26 School Year that directly ties back to the established goal. Based on NWEA results, 44.3% of students were *On Track* for the ACT and 77.1% were *On Track* for the SAT in Reading. In Mathematics, 77.5% of students were *On Track* for the ACT and 69% were *On Track* for the SAT.	*Check one of the following:* ___ Goal Met (multi-year goal) ___ Goal Not Met (multi-year goal) _X_ On Track (multi-year goal) ___ Not On Track (multi-year goal)

All Students Graduate

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established SMART goal for the 2025–26 School Year. Yinghua Academy is a K-8th grade school. Graduation does not apply.	Provide the result for the 2025–26 School Year that directly ties back to the established goal. N/A	*Check one of the following:* ___ Goal Met (one-year goal) ___ Goal Not Met (one-year goal) ___ Goal Met (multi-year goal) ___ Goal Not Met (multi-year goal) ___ On Track (multi-year goal) ___ Not On Track (multi-year goal _X_ N/A (no 12th grade enrollment)

All Students Prepared to Be Lifelong Learners

Goal	Result	Goal Status
Provide the established SMART goal for the 2025–2026 school year school year. While the following goal is not written in full SMART format, it is aligned with our Strategic Plan. A key objective is to foster students' self-confidence and well-being while preparing them to meet future challenges with a global mindset. To track progress toward this objective, the school will design and facilitate meaningful learning opportunities that broaden students' understanding of the world. Each year, Yinghua Academy will organize at least	Provide the result for the 2025–2026 school year that directly ties back to the established goal. The events that met the goal: 1. During the 2025–2026 school year, Yinghua students continued connecting with peers at sister schools, and Yinghua Academy established relationships with two new partner schools in China. Fourth-grade and middle school students exchanged messages through online apps, shared what they were learning in class, and mailed greeting cards and packages containing items that reflected their cultures. These exchanges gave	*Check one of the following:* _X_ Goal Met (one-year goal) __ Goal Not Met (one-year goal)

five special learning events—such as cultural exchanges, academic competitions, guest presentations, or global learning experiences—to expand students' perspectives and strengthen their global competence.	students opportunities to use Mandarin and learn about their peers' school experiences and traditions. 2. On September 26, Yinghua Academy welcomed a group of 14 performers from the Taiwan Acrobatic Troupe of the National Taiwan College of Performing Arts, along with accompanying community members. The visitors spent time interacting with students in classrooms and presented a short performance that captivated and impressed our students. Through this cultural exchange, students gained insight into the dedication and practice required for such high-level performances. The visit from a professional international troupe enriched our school community with a vibrant cultural experience. 3. On Friday, October 24, a delegation visit by three representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) in Chicago occurred at Yinghua Academy. They observed kindergarten classrooms, interacted with students, and attended a period-2 welcome assembly in the gym featuring student performances with middle school students in attendance. 4. During Kindness Month in October 2025, Yinghua invited magician Curtis Hed to present *The Magic of Being Kind*. Through storytelling, magic, and audience participation, students explored how their words and actions can help prevent bullying and make classmates feel included. Students and staff also created a Kindness Tree in the cafeteria, adding leaves with messages of encouragement, empathy, and gratitude. Yinghua shared bullying prevention resources with families in English and Spanish. 5. On the evening of April 30, Illustrator Julia Kuo, creator of the new book Bing's Cherries, visited Yinghua Academy. Approximately 15	

	families attended the event. Wild Rumpus Bookstore was on-site to provide copies of Julia Kuo's books for purchase and book signing. During the event, Ms. Kuo shared her journey as a book illustrator, discussed her work and the story behind Bing's Cherries, and met with students and families. Yinghua families provided very positive feedback about the event, and several parents generously purchased and donated copies of Ms. Kuo's books to the Yinghua library. 6. From June 12 to June 26, 2026, 31 students and four chaperones completed a successful study abroad trip to Taiwan, visiting Taipei, Taichung, Kaohsiung, Hengchun Township, Chishang Township, Hualien City, and Dongshan Township. During the trip, the students had the opportunity to explore three of our sister schools: Minzu Elementary School, Taipei Municipal Yangming High School, and Kaohsiung Municipal Nanlong Junior High School. Students experienced both homestays and dormitory living, participated in field trips, and were fully immersed in everyday Taiwanese culture. This meaningful journey left a lasting, positive impact, broadening students' perspectives and deepening their understanding of Taiwanese society, education, and culture.	

Compliance with Minnesota Statutes

This document fulfills two requirements. Under Minnesota Statutes, charter schools must publish an annual report, approved by the school's board of directors, covering enrollment, attrition, governance, management, staffing, finance, academics, innovation, and future plans. Charter schools must also submit the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report required by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). The applicable statutes are sections 124E.12, subdivision 2, and 120B.11.

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Reports Submitted

The Yinghua Academy School Board (Board of Directors) voted to approve the 2025–2026 Annual Report and the 2025–2026 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report on November 16, 2026. On November 17, 2026, the Annual Report was posted to the Friends of Education portal, and the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report was uploaded to the Minnesota Department of Education report site.

On November 17, 2026, Yinghua Academy published its 2025–2026 Annual Report and 2025–2026 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report on the school's website. On November 20, 2026, the school distributed the two reports electronically to stakeholders, including the Board of Directors, staff, and currently enrolled families.