

Yinghua Academy Board Meeting Minutes
January 29, 2007

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Cindy Moeller, Kristina Schatz, Michael VanKeulen, Margaret Wong, Larry Yan

BOARD MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Sandy Doubek, Doug Parish

DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Besty Lueth

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Luyi Luen (Curriculum Coordinator), Kerri Norell (teacher), Matthew Brandt & Jessica (Minnesota Humanities Commission)

CORE KNOWLEDGE PRESENTATION FROM THE MN HUMANITIES COMMISSION

The Humanities Commission started supporting Core Knowledge in 1998. It appealed to the Humanities Commission because it has a strong Humanities core and offers the idea that everyone has a right to a strong content curriculum.

Friends of Ascension approached MN Humanities Commission four years ago and asked them to be their education partner. MN Humanities Commission provided objective assessments on how Friends of Ascension schools were doing. Currently MN Humanities Commission is acting in a support role.

MN Humanities Commission current two-year plan with Core Knowledge Schools:

- 1) Training educators
- 2) Building support networks
- 3) Board education (How can a board support Core Knowledge on site?)

How to support the School / Core Knowledge

- 1) Create a vision that provides a direction for teachers.
- 2) Create an open environment for discussion amongst teachers and create common planning time.
- 3) Keep both the Director and Curriculum Coordinator positions.
- 4) Try to get the most out of your resources dollars.
- 5) Provide professional staff development that aligns with your academic program.

APPROVALS

1/29/07 Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda forwarded by Ms. Schatz, the motion was seconded by Ms. Wong.
Approved unanimously.

12/04/06 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve the 12/4/06 meeting minutes forwarded by Mr. VanKeulen, the motion was seconded by Ms. Wong. Approved unanimously.

1/08/07 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve the 1/8/07 meeting minutes forwarded by Mr. VanKeulen, the motion was seconded by Ms. Wong. Approved unanimously.

RESIGNATION

Ms. Chin submitted her resignation via e-mail. The Board acknowledged her hard work on the development of Yinghua Academy and offers support and encouragement on her future endeavor in helping to create an immersion school in Hopkins.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Enrollment

Currently we have eighty-eight students

- 38 kindergartners
- 25 first graders
- 15 second graders
- 10 third graders

Staff

- A new paraprofessional was hired for 12 hours per week
- Staff and parent evaluations will begin this week.
- Today was a professional Development day. An experienced Spanish Immersion teacher provided immersion training to staff for half of the day.
- Chinese New Year Celebration on February 16th from 1:30 to 3:00. Open to grandparents, parents, Board members and Yinghua community.

2007/2008 Applications

- 44 kindergartners
- 3 first graders
- 1 second grader
- 2 third graders
- 4 fourth graders

Reporting Requirements:

- STAR Report will be complete by 1/31/07
- CREDO report will be resubmitted complete by 1/31/07

Financial

- Will provide an amendment for the Federal Implementation Grant to Belz by 2/15/07 for the 2006-2007 school year.
- Goldman Sachs grant due 2/5/07

Curriculum / Instruction

- NWEA test completed 2 and 3rd grade testing and 3rd grade seems to be on track for MCA testing in April.
- MCA tests were ordered and are scheduled for April 16th, 17th, and April 23rd, and 24th for 3rd grade only.
- Adult Chinese Classes will begin February 13th from 6:30-8:30 (10 weeks for \$150.00).
- Mr. VanKeulen suggested that we consider a class on English language instruction and how parents can support their English language learning.

Visit to the Confucius Institute in Kansas

- Ms. Lueth learned that there will be a teacher exchange through the Institute that will include Elementary Education teachers.
- Kansas gave a distance learning demonstration. There does seem to be very good potential with distance learning for adult education.

Tours

- Minnetonka, Hopkins and St. Cloud came for tours last week. These three districts are planning to open Chinese immersion programs.

UPDATES/OLD BUSINESS

FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms. Lueth distributed December financials.

YACA UPDATE

YACA does not feel that it can make a Spring Cultural Fair happen this year. This fundraising cultural fair will be postponed until spring of next year.

BOARD MEMBER ELECTIONS

Ms. Moeller distributed “Transitioning from a Founding Board to an Elected Board” and explained this proposed process for our board transition. By law, charter schools must have a fully-elected board by the end of their third year of operation.

Before discussing this outline in detail, the board discussed how to fill board seats that become vacant between board elections. The board decided on the following process in the event that a board seat becomes available due to a current board member’s resignation at any time throughout the year.

- 1) All board members will be notified of the available seat.
- 2) Board members will be given a set time period in which they can make board recommendations to the Chair of the Board.
- 3) The board chair will follow-up with potential candidates and provide an opportunity for board/candidate interaction.
- 4) Board member will vote on one candidate for the board seat.

The board then discussed the outline Ms. Moeller had provided for “Transitioning from a Founding Board to an Elected Board.” Ms. Schatz recommended that with two additions the board transition policy be adopted. Mr. VanKuelen seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

A copy of the approved document "Transitioning from a Founding Board to an Elected Board", which includes sections on:

- Background
- Vision of the Yinghua Academy Board
- Board Transition Plan
- Election Process and Timing During March-June 2007
- Filling Vacancies at Times Other Than Board Elections

will be attached to these minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

One current priority of the planning committee is to create a space plan for growth over the next four years. Ms. Schatz and Ms. Lueth created a possible space scenario that will be taken to the landlord for input and then be brought to the board.

LOTTERY PROCESS FOR STUDENT APPLICATIONS

The board discussed a couple of different ways to hold a random selection process that would actually be random and that would look and feel random to the parents of prospective students. The board decided to use a "bingo machine" with balls. For each grade each student application will be assigned a "bingo number" and then students will be offered a place at the school based on when their ball was drawn. The board discussed at length in which order the separate grades should be handled. Given the uncertainty of whether Yinghua Academy will have separate 3rd and 4th grades next year or a combined 3rd-4th grade class, and given the high number of kindergarten applications, the board decided to conduct the lottery in the following order: Kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade, 3rd grade, and 4th grade.

CHINESE NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATION -- US-CHINA PEOPLE'S FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION ON 2/11

Ms. Wong shared some information about this event and encouraged people associated with Yinghua Academy to come. Several board members have indicated their interest in participating. Ms. Lueth is going to let all Yinghua Academy staff know about this event; and Ms. Moeller is going to notify both the two board members who were absent tonight as well as the members of the YACA board.

MARKETING

The board is pleased with the number of applications that have been received for the 2007-2008 school year, so there is not a strong sense of urgency to launch a significant marketing campaign at this time. However, the board agreed that we should still make the school visible. Ms. Lueth and Ms. Moeller offered to place a few strategic ads in newspapers in nearby communities.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50PM.

Yinghua Academy

Transitioning from a Founding Board to an Elected Board

draft – 1/29/07 (with revisions discussed as 1/29/07 board meeting)

Background

According to Minnesota State Law, charter schools must have an entirely elected board by the end of the third year of operation. In the case of Yinghua Academy, that means by June 2009.

The Yinghua Academy Board has had a number of discussions about how best to manage the transition from the founding board to an elected board, keeping in mind the importance of having:

- A gradual and smooth transition;
- A broad-based board that includes people of Chinese heritage, people with business experience, people with educational experience, parents of Yinghua Academy parents, and Yinghua Academy staff;
- All board seats elected no later than June 2009.

In order to address these important considerations, the board has adopted both a Vision of the Yinghua Academy Board, a Board Transition Plan, and a specific plan for the elections in June 2007.

Vision of the Yinghua Academy Board

The founding board of Yinghua Academy believes that the interests of Yinghua Academy will be best-served by having a board that has similar characteristics to the founding board. Given a 9-person board, this means having 2-3 board members who represent each of the following:

- Chinese heritage
- Business experience
- Education experience
- Parent of a Yinghua Academy student
- Yinghua Academy staff member

It seems likely that most board members will embody two or even three of these characteristics.

Of course, all eligible voters (which include parents of current Yinghua Academy students as well as Yinghua Academy staff members) have the right to vote for the candidates they think will best serve the school. However, the founding board wants to share its vision of the type of board that will likely be the most effective in leading the development of the school and making critical decisions in the years to come.

Board Transition Plan

According to the Yinghua Academy By-Laws, the intention is to have a 9-member board. The board has also determined that the terms for elected board members will all be three years.

The founding board has adopted the following plan for transitioning to an elected board:

1				These 3 board seats up for election in June 2007 and again in June 2010.				
2								
3								
4					These 3 board seats up for election in June 2008 and again in June 2011.			
5								
6								
7						These 3 seats up for election in June 2009 and June 2012.		
8								
9								
June 2007	June 2008	June 2009	June 2010	June 2011	June 2012			

Three board members will be elected at the Yinghua Academy Annual Meeting in June 2007. As of January 29, 2007, there are two vacant seats on the board. No later than March 1, 2007, another current board seat will be identified as up for election, either because the current board member has resigned or because one of the current board members has agreed to have his/her seat up for election in June 2007.

Election Process and Timing During March – June 2007

<u>Timing</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Early March 2007	Outreach to Potential Board Members Begins. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A letter will be sent to all Yinghua parents. - Board members and other people associated with Yinghua Academy may contact potential board members.
April 16, 2007	People who think they may want to run for a board seat should inform Cindy Moeller by this date of their interest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cindy Moeller will send information about the responsibilities of charter school board members to all people who indicate an interest by this date. - If there is sufficient interest on the part of board candidates, a special meeting may be held to review these responsibilities, possible immediately before the April 23 board meeting.
Monday, April 23, 2007	All potential board members will be invited to attend this regular board meeting.
Monday, May 21, 2007	All potential board members will be invited to attend this regular board meeting.
Tuesday, May 22, 2007	Candidates who want to run for a board seat must notify Cindy Moeller by this date and must submit a statement explaining why they want to be on the board and what skills, expertise, and/or perspective they believe they could bring to the board.
Wednesday, June 6, 2007	Ballots will be mailed to all Yinghua parents and will be hand-distributed to Yinghua staff members.
Saturday, June 9, 2007	Forum for Board Member Candidates, at which each candidate will have 3-5 minutes to speak with the group, following by the End-of-the-Year Picnic. Both events will be held at the school. (Arrangements will be made so that any immersion teacher who is a candidate for a board seat will have an opportunity to speak in English at the meeting, i.e., any Yinghua students will be entertained in another room of the school.)
Thursday, June 21, 2007	All ballots must be returned to the school by 5PM. Ballots received after this time will not be counted.
Monday, June 25, 2007	6:00 – 6:30 Yinghua Academy Annual Meeting. New board members will be announced. 6:30 – 8:30 Regular monthly board meeting. New board members may attend. The terms of the new board members will begin on July 1, 2007.

Filling Vacancies at Times Other Than Board Elections

Consistent with Article III. Section 10 of the Yinghua Academy By-Laws, "... vacancies on the Board caused by death, disqualification, resignation, disability, removal, or other such cause, shall be filled by appointment of a new Member of the Board by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining Members of the Board, even if less than a quorum. A Board Member filling a vacancy shall hold office for the remaining term of the board seat filled."