

Yinghua Academy Board Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2010
Final

Board Members in Attendance

Maryann Choy, Scott Jax, Taoyuan Li, Luyi Lien, Cindy Moeller (Chair), Naomi Mueller, Keri Norell, Joe Yang, Abigail Pribbenow (Secretary), Janine Trutna

Board Members Not in Attendance

Doug Parish (Treasurer)

Director in Attendance

Betsy Lueth

YACA Representative in Attendance (*ex officio*, non-voting)

Ruth Straub

Public in Attendance

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Moeller called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. APPROVALS

A. Agenda:

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the agenda with changes.

B. 02/01/10 Board Meeting Minutes

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve with corrections the minutes of the February 1, 2010, meeting of the board.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

IV. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Enrollment/Students

1. Current enrollment is 302.

K 75 (15 on the waiting list)

1st 75 (9 waiting)

2nd 50 (1 waiting)

3rd 45 (5 openings)

4th 25 (1 waiting)

5th 22 (3 openings)

6th 11 (14 openings)

2. 2010-2011 kindergarten enrollment is 78 representing an over-enrollment of three students. This is due to the fact that there are two sets of twins entering kindergarten. The sibling waiting list for 1st grade has five students on it. There are 85 students on the non-sibling kindergarten waiting list. In the lottery this month, there was about a 33% chance of a non-sibling child being admitted.

B. Curriculum

1. The school plans to purchase at least one 20-unit MacBook mobile computer lab and two interactive white boards to support curriculum development and design objectives.
2. Mid-year NWEA map tests have been completed for all students in reading and math, and mid-year Chinese testing will take place in March. Results will be shared at March conferences.
3. Young Audiences artistic partnerships are underway with the “Alphabet Man” and the Children’s Theatre Company.
4. The school has submitted a 2010 budget for the HanBan Confucius Classroom grant. The grant is for additional K-5 technology and enhanced Chinese Cultural music programming.
5. Training on “action research,” a process which includes data collection, will be conducted during March professional development days. This method dovetails with Q-comp and helps to ensure a strong curriculum.
6. Middle school clubs (running, gardening, Chinese math, and yearbook) will begin in March.
7. The school has phone-screened 30 applicants for teaching positions for next year.

C. Facilities

1. During the next two months the school will conduct a review of the current facility and space requirements. Some construction will take place in summer 2010.
2. The facilities use policy for non-profit use of Yinghua’s gym has been approved.
3. \$20,000 of lease-hold improvements paid will be transferred to the overall cost of the building through CSDC. Costs will need to be finalized before the completing the final *pro forma*.
4. The school is waiting for a Petro Fund reimbursement of \$10,000.

D. Financial/Grant

1. An NMSI site visit will take place in late March. The NMSI grant is to support pre-Advanced Placement coursework in the middle school.
2. The school received a two-year \$5,500 PACE grant to support Chinese calligraphy and other fine art experiences linked to the 2011 Chinese New Year celebrations. Karen Calcaterra, the school’s grant administrator, is finding that there are many opportunities to apply for arts funding.
3. The school received a \$3,500 grant for School Safety, Health and Nutrition to support composting, a gardening club for 6th graders and a wellness committee.

4. Maintenance and non-instructional supply costs exceed the current budget. This is under review.

E. Reporting

1. All reporting is up-to-date.

F. Staffing

1. The school is recruiting and hiring for the 2010-2011 school year and this process will be completed before the March 18 meeting of the board. H1B visa paperwork must be submitted by April 1.
2. Current teachers will be evaluated by administrators and by members of the Evaluation and Assessment Team (Q-Comp team of teachers) in March.
3. On Saturday, February 20, the school conducted a three-hour staff orientation and training for recently hired staff. The agenda included professional development in academic areas as well as in classroom management, parent communication, legal compliance and behavioral education curriculum and approaches.

G. Students/Families

1. More than 700 people attended Chinese New Year celebrations. Members of MACS, CSP, NE Park and Rec and some neighbors attended along with families and friends.
2. Carl Schlueter will present behavioral education information at the upcoming YACA general membership meeting.
1. Staff enjoyed the Chinese New Year dinner on Friday, February 12. This was funded through Teacher Appreciation donations via YACA and the Classroom Coordinators.

H. Transportation

1. This school year, there are twelve students riding the Minneapolis bus route. The current Yinghua Academy budget pays for this bussing service to residents of Minneapolis who elect to use the bus. There are 80 seats on the bus.
2. The school is preparing to send out a transportation survey to assess needs for the next school year.
3. Ms. Lueth met with Voigt Bussing to talk about three possible Yinghua routes using 80-seat busses picking up at "hub stops".
4. The school proposes to set up three routes covering Roseville/Minneapolis, Highland Park/Minneapolis and Woodbury/Minneapolis.
5. Non-Minneapolis families using the bus would have to make a down-payment for bus service and the monthly fee for suburban busses would be \$150/month per child.
6. The first child to board the bus may have to ride for up to 90 minutes. For Minneapolis residents the ride could last up to 60 minutes.
7. The alternative to the three parent-funded suburban/Minneapolis routes is no suburban bussing with two school-funded Minneapolis routes. This would cost the school \$90,000.
8. Neither of these alternatives would have an impact on school start and end times.

V. UPDATES/OLD BUSINESS

A. Board Training

1. BKDA is now an approved provider of board training for charter school boards.

B. Facilities and Minneapolis Parks and Recreation

1. Mr. Yang invited Mike Schmidt for lunch to talk through the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board reciprocal use agreement of the Yinghua gym and the Parks' fields. Mr. Schmidt has not yet replied to the invitation.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously upheld to approve the policy "Third Party Use of the School Gym."

2. Mr. Yang has tendered his resignation from the Facilities Committee of which he has served as chair. Mr. Jax will assume leadership of the committee.
3. CSDC has confirmed that there is a proposed new Minnesota law, now in bill form, which would take away charter schools' ability to keep and earn interest on any funds resulting from the difference between the school's monthly rent payment and its monthly lease aid.
4. Mr. Yang advises that this may be a good time for a bond issue, but the markets may be skittish due to the unknowns in the Minnesota legislature.

C. Financial

1. January financial statements are being revised.

D. Fundraising

1. The school has signed on as a venue in the North East Minneapolis "Art-A-Whirl" festival. Yinghua will participate only on the Saturday (May 15) of the regional art fair. This is primarily a community relationship-building event and is being designed as a family-friendly fair with Asian flare.
2. The fund raising committee is working to finalize a calendar of events for 2010-2011.

E. HR Committee

The committee met for the first time this month and is considering two different committee mission statements.

F. Marketing

1. The Committee will meet next Friday, February 26.

2. The Google word campaign started—this is an effort to steer people to the Yinghua website. Since February 10, \$0.58 has been charged to the school’s coupon.
3. On Thursday, February 25, Ms. Trutna will discuss the school’s Facebook page with Jen Shadowens, a committee member who has been working on this.
4. The school will be an advertiser at the Dragon Boat Festival in July, but it will not have a school boat in the race.
5. Representatives from the Daily Planet and MACS attended the Chinese New Year celebrations at Yinghua.
6. Signs for inside the school are underway.
7. The Marketing Committee will look into a policy regarding filming at Open Houses.
8. The Marketing Committee will research the phrase “creating global citizens”.

G. Mission statement review

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve a new mission statement for the school:

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.

H. Policy Review Committee

1. The group will meet to discuss what policies are in place and what model to use for review and updating policies.

I. Special Education Parent Advisory Council

2. The Special Education Parent Advisory Council met on Wednesday, February 10 from 4:30-5:45 p.m. Sixteen people attended.
3. The group shared perspectives on what families wish to have happen in their children’s education. Topics discussed included: Desire to eliminate the stigma associated with special education, desire to make the inclusion process smoother, spreading the word that immersion is not just for the gifted and talented, help teachers understand disabilities, earlier intervention, curriculum, desire for more OT services and hope that services will continue after the student leaves Yinghua.
4. The group responded to the question, “The purpose of our SEAC is to?” Responses included: emphasize that serving students with special needs benefits the school as a whole, advocate for high-quality programs for all learners, emphasize acceptance and benefits of diversity, and explore research-based technology for teaching home-based programs (e.g., in reading) and reach out for technology used beyond our district.
5. Topics participants would like to cover in the future include: teaching staff about bio-neurological differences in children with special needs, ways to teach acceptance of differences, strategies for inclusion of special needs students, offering these topics in Chinese to Chinese speaking teachers, teacher training in Chinese regarding behavioral

issues with children with special needs, teaming up with other high performing SEAC in immersion schools for mutual support, inviting speakers from Pacer, partnering with Minneapolis Public Libraries for books on CDs, de-mystifying special education and raising awareness of special needs.

6. The group will next meet in April with email distributed via email.

J. Strategic Planning/Mission Measurement (M-2)

Ms. Moeller, Ms. Lien, Ms. Trutna, Ms. Pribbenow and Ms. Lueth met to develop measurements for continuous improvement of the school according to its mission. The group is hoping to share a plan with the board at the April meeting.

K. Technology Committee—Kristin Swenson will meet with two vendors regarding the website.

L. YACA

1. The Red Envelope Campaign is continuing. At last tally the effort had raised \$10,800.
2. A General Membership meeting is coming up on February 27. Mr. Schlueter will speak.
3. Ms. Lueth will speak about the middle school at the May 5 meeting.
4. In March, YACA will evaluate its fund raisers for the next year.
5. Elections are coming up for Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.
6. Bylaws will be reviewed in the spring.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of New Board Members—Updating Bylaws

1. Ms. Pribbenow and Ms. Straub will work on a letter to Yinghua families explaining the board election process and what qualities the board is seeking in its new candidates for the board. In particular, the board would like to emphasize legal background, commercial real estate experience and marketing.
2. The board will vote on the letter at the March meeting.

B. Enrollment Policy—discuss at next meeting

C. Student Leave Policy— discuss at next meeting

VII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.