

YINGHUA ACADEMY BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING ON 12/10/07

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Cindy Moeller, Michael VanKeulen, Kristina Schatz, Luyi Lien, Sandy Doubek, Joe Yang, Clark Liu, Margaret Wong, Doug Parish (via phone)

BOARD MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Larry Yan

DIRECTOR IN ATTENDANCE

Betsy Lueth

Call to Order

Ms. Moeller called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

Financial Report

Mr. Parish called in remotely to update the board on the November financial statements and the Fiscal 2007 audited financial statement.

Audit complete – Summary of results:

- Financials look good.
- Segregation of duties is fine.
- Material weakness created because of error by Beltz Kes.

Mr. Parish proposed that a representative of Beltz Kes come to the January 7th board meeting to discuss and explain how the material weakness occurred.

There was also a discussion of the challenges this year of working with the auditing firm, especially related to communication. Mr. Parish suggested, and the board agreed, that the Yinghua Academy board will explore the possibility of working with a different auditor for the 2007-2008 school year.

The board also reviewed and discussed the November financial statements.

Approvals

A motion to approve the agenda, as amended, was forwarded by Mr. Yang and seconded by Ms. Wong. Amendment included the addition of the Immersion Workshop in October 2008 in New Business. The amended agenda was approved unanimously.

Minutes from the 11/19/07 Board Meeting were approved, as amended, through a motion forwarded by Mr. Yang and seconded by Ms. Doubek.

Report from the Director

Ms. Lueth reported that there are currently 149 students enrolled at Yinghua Academy:

- 45 kindergartners
- 44 1st-graders
- 25 2nd-graders
- 18 3rd-graders
- 17 4th-graders

Ms. Lueth also reported that she and the teachers are conducting monthly curriculum reviews in conjunction with the World Languages Grant.

Ms. Lueth reported that the safety of the playground has been reviewed and certified by a safety expert.

Ms. Lueth reported that she has submitted an application for a grant to the Goldman Sachs Foundation.

Ms. Lueth noted that we are working with several of our teachers and supporting their PERM applications. She anticipates recommending that some of our grant from the Walton Foundation be used to support 2-4 H1B applications, beginning in January for April 1 submission. Ms. Lueth will provide more specific information for the board to consider at the next board meeting.

Ms. Lueth also noted that we have submitted an application for the School Finance Award, which is a program of the Minnesota Department of Education and is designed to recognize schools that meet a variety of requirements of the MN Department of Education.

Ms. Lueth also reviewed with the board the current status of our grant from the Walton Foundation. Though the Walton grant does not require spending in specific categories, Ms. Lueth shared a spreadsheet she has developed and is using to track spending from the Walton grant. Ms. Lueth has tentatively revised the Walton budget to focus more spending on contract services and less spending on equipment and supplies. Mr. VanKeulen made a motion that the board approve the plan Ms. Lueth shared regarding spending the Walton grant. Dr. Lien seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

To-date Yinghua Academy has expended \$131,000 of the \$180,000 Walton grant, which had originally been awarded to Harriet Bishop Academy (the precursor to Yinghua Academy) approximately three years ago. This grant has been used very judiciously.

Updates/Old Business

Facilities

Another charter school is looking for a school to share the Smyth building located on Como and Snelling. Ms. Moeller looked into this for Yinghua and found that a decision needed to be made immediately, which would not suit our needs.

YACA

The next YACA board meeting will take place next week. On January 12, 2008 YACA will have a general membership meeting with guest speaker Jodi James, who will talk about how families can support their children participating in an immersion environment.

A Core Knowledge speaker will speak at the next YACA general membership meeting in March.

The YACA budget will need to be published; and the YACA board is working on this.

YACA plans to send out a monthly newsletter, which will be distributed on the first Friday of the month along with the other monthly newsletters being sent home from Yinghua Academy.

Marketing Strategy – Developing and Implementing

Ms. Schatz gave an update on the work of the Marketing Committee. Ms. Moeller mentioned that the Website Committee is in the process of updating the website, and the new content will be posted before Christmas. Rebecca Kreitzer, Yinghua Academy's Office Manager, will be the liaison between the Marketing Committee and the Website Committee and will help to coordinate their work.

6th Grade and Beyond

New Middle School – Mr. Yang has left a message with the Director of the Milwaukee School of Languages and would like to set up a visit as soon as possible. Mr. Yang will continue to investigate this.

Partnering with an Existing District or Charter School – Ms. Lueth is planning to talk with Mr. Corey Maslowski. Mr. VanKeulen shared that he has talked with Heidi Bernal of the St. Paul Public Schools; and he is scheduling a meeting with Ms. Bernal, Ms. Lueth, Ms. Schatz, and himself to explore the possibility of Yinghua Academy collaborating with the St. Paul Public Schools.

Extending the Yinghua Charter to at least K-8th Grade – Dr. Lien reported that 50% of parents surveyed at the Saturday Chinese school would come to Yinghua if we extended our charter. Ms. Moeller distributed to board members a summary of the findings to-date of the board committee that is exploring this option. This summary includes the considerations this committee has identified and the follow-up that the committee is currently doing. One school that is of particular interest is the Chinese-American International School in San Francisco, a well-established, private, K-8 Chinese immersion school that apparently has a very successful middle school program. Ms. Lueth offered to contact this school, which she and Dr. Lien visited last year for a conference, for additional information about their middle school program.

New Business

Due to the out-of-town travel plans of several board members, the board decided to move the January 7 Board Meeting to January 14, 2008.

The election of officers of the board will take place at the January 14 board meeting. The Yinghua Academy By-Laws stipulate the election of officers at the first board meeting in January every year. Ms. Moeller asked that current officers advise her of their intention to run or not to run; and she will notify the other board members. She also asked other board members to notify her no later than January 7 of their intention to run for an officer position.

Adjourn

Ms. Moeller adjourned the meeting at 8:30PM.