



**YINGHUA
ACADEMY**

1616 Buchanan St. N.E., Minneapolis, MN 55413
phone: 612.788.9095

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CONTACT:

Janine Trutna

Phone: 651-699-2801

Fax: 651-688-0044

jtrutna@inkbig.com

Yinghua Academy Awarded Over \$800,000 for Middle School Program

Minneapolis, MN, September < >, 2009. Yinghua Academy, the first Chinese immersion charter school in the Midwest, has been awarded an \$811,765 Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The grant comes the same year the schools' charter moved from a K-5th to a K-8th school, and the school moved into a new, larger location (the former Putnam School located in Northeast Minneapolis). "All three of these things come together to allow us to continue our strong program, right up through the 8th grade. The entire school community has been very excited about our move into the new building, and by receiving the FLAP grant, we are really positioned well to continue our outstanding program through middle school," notes Betsy Lueth, Yinghua Academy's director.

The grant will be paid out over a three-year period and will support the development of two different middle school curricular tracks at the school. One will be for the continuing, immersion students and the other will be for new students entering middle school at Yinghua Academy. The incoming students will receive Chinese as a foreign language while the majority of their school day is in English. The ongoing immersion students will further their language learning at appropriate levels, which will include some core subjects taught in Chinese. Both programs will offer an increased use of technology to do research and communicate with peers around the world. The middle school program will continue the school's focus on rigorous academics, particularly in math and science, with the overall goal of developing students into global citizens, complete with bilingual ability in Chinese, critical thinking and 21st century skills.

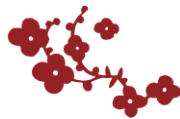
The grant also encourages professional development and allows Yinghua Academy to share the best practices, creating replicable and sustainable programs for middle schools that bridge the gap between content-based and language-based instruction in Chinese. Currently there are five total immersion Chinese elementary programs in the state. Yinghua Academy will be the first Chinese middle school that builds on an elementary immersion program. Statewide, about 600 students are enrolled in these immersion programs and that number is projected to increase to 1300 by 2012. Notes Dr. Luyi Lien, Yinghua Academy's Academic Director, "There will be a growing need for this

type of middle school programming. As the first Chinese immersion elementary in the state, we've been involved in educating the larger community and helping other MN Chinese programs develop their teachers and content. We have also hosted tours of visiting teachers from around the country and presented our findings at national conferences. This grant will allow us to continue those efforts into the middle school area."

Students in the middle school program will notice many additions from the grant as well. There will be added technology in the classrooms, using laptops, interactive whiteboards and various software programs to create multimedia research projects. A sister-school in China will be established and video and pod casting will be used to foster friendships and learning between the schools. This will also set the groundwork for a capstone 8th grade class trip to China to meet the sister-school students in person. "The students will really develop and feel the *global citizen* part of this program," says Lueth, "Using technology to establish direct relationships with students in China and then to go and visit them, to shake hands and speak to them in Chinese will be powerful. They'll leave MN, yet feel at home and connected to a place and people that's around the world."

About Yinghua Academy

Yinghua Academy is the first Chinese elementary and middle school in the Midwest. The mission of Yinghua Academy is to provide a challenging and comprehensive learning environment that will nurture students' natural inquisitiveness and will prepare them to be engaged and productive global citizens. Students will develop intellectual curiosity and critical-thinking skills as well as a broad and deep knowledge in language arts, mathematics, world and American history and culture, science, and fine arts. Yinghua Academy is a tuition-free charter public school. For more information contact 612-788-9095 or visit <http://www.yinghuaacademy.org>



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