

Regular Meeting of the Yinghua Academy School Board
1616 Buchanan Street NE, Minneapolis, MN, Media Center
Monday, March 23, 2015, 6:00 PM

Board Members in Attendance: Denny Grubish (Treasurer), Emily Hanson, Scott Jax, Jan Kleinman (Secretary), Rosemary Lawrence, Karen Lu (Chair), Suzanne Reider, Jen Shadowens, Sarah Whiting

Board Members not in Attendance: Walt Graff, Seth Werner

Executive Director in Attendance: Sue Berg

YACA Chair in Attendance: Dina Nash

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Lu called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

II. APPROVALS (20 min.)

a. 3/23/15 Agenda

The MOTION by Mr. Jax to approve the agenda was seconded and passed.

b. 2/16/15 Regular Meeting Minutes

The MOTION by Mr. Grubish to approve the minutes was seconded and passed.

c. Policy 601 Curriculum and Instruction Goals – Second Reading

No comments were offered.

d. Policy 603 Curriculum Development – Second Reading

No comments were offered.

e. Policy 210.1 Conflict of Interest – Second Reading

Brief explanation of previous edits was offered. One additional minor edit was noted.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

IV. FACILITIES UPDATE (7 min.)

Mr. Jax reported that the gymnasium wall, which had previously suffered moisture damage, has been sealed. Questions were raised about any future mold issues and the extent of the warranty. It was suggested that regular checks to catch future moisture might be helpful. Mr. Jax will inquire about the warranty, and ask for regular check-ups. He further reported that Mr. Vang has a tickler system in place to track multiple warranties. Mr. Vang's job with Yinghua Academy extends through warranty period.

Mr. Jax further reported on an outstanding invoice from Grace Lutheran Church, where the Kinder campus was previously located for two school years. The outstanding invoice has been slow to resolve because Grace had changes in accounting, payroll and overall leadership. There are two items that are being researched on that invoice.

Solar panels for Yinghua are under discussion. A conversation with Cedar Creek Energy is ongoing, and Xcel Energy has been asked to provide a 36-month energy usage report for Yinghua Academy.

V. FINANCE UPDATE (16 min.)

Mr. Grubish reported that administration has scheduled a preliminary meeting with him about their proposed budget later this week. Following that, the budget proposal will be considered by the Finance Committee.

Board discussed issues of salary spread between lowest and highest paid employees; amount of salary increase; merits of offering bonuses versus salary increases; possible bonus for executive director. It was noted that licensed teacher salaries are public information, although it was not known how up-to-date the website listing such information is kept. Teachers working on community expert waivers would not have their salaries available publicly.

The bond assumption requires significant paperwork. Ms. Berg assured Board that there was money available and a plan to hire Abigail Pribbenow to help assemble it. Thanks were offered to Ms. Pribbenow, Ms. Vanyo and Ms. Berg for their time and effort on this important project.

VI. PERSONNEL UPDATE (10 min.)

Recently, parents and teachers have approached committee with questions about salaries. The Personnel Committee reflected on these questions and recommended protocol. Committee recommends that such questions be redirected to administrative staff.

Ms. Berg reported about how she approaches staff who are not performing well. She “errs on the side of optimism,” attempting to guide staff in improving performance. Observation and feedback process is part of all staff professional development. Her main goal is maintaining positive learning environment for students throughout the academic year.

Draft of Executive Director review will be sent to Board members for comment soon. The review document will be finalized at April Board meeting.

VII. GOVERNANCE UPDATE (18 min.)

a. Revised Bylaws – Second Reading

Ms. Shadowens will check on standard language used with respect to amending bylaws

b. Board Elections Update

Thus far, two current committee members have applied. Current Board members have reached out to potential candidates. Ms. Shadowens will send a targeted email to invite eligible teachers to consider applying.

VIII. STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION (19 min.)

The Board retreat will focus on planning and unfinished business. Ms. Lu asked members to review all annual goals in advance and highlight items that need further work. An electronic version will be shared with all Board members, and comments can be added electronically.

Board is also considering the next strategic plan. Board members were asked to put out feelers for potential strategic planners to assist.

Discussion about potential of alumni students and families to describe the value of a Yinghua education. Perhaps a new goal can include these ideas.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS (13 min.)

Ms. Berg recommends that a policy be instituted which states when mid-year enrollment ends. For grades 2 – 8, she recommends January 2 or start of term 2. Kindergarten and grade 1 students may enter at any time, pending room in the class. Ms. Berg reported that enrollment as of today is 667. Since 5 students were on the wait list, each was called prior to end of term 2 and the challenges of mid-year enrollment at an immersion school were explained. As a result, this week saw a few new enrollments. Yinghua will supply educational assistance for newly enrolled students as necessary. Governance Committee will draft the policy change for Board review and approval.

X. SURVEYS (2 min.)

Intended timing for offering surveys will be before and during parent-teacher conferences. Mr. Jax and Ms. Kleinman will revisit last year's surveys and consider whether edits or changes are warranted.

XI. DEVELOPMENT (2 min.)

\$49,063.16 has thus far been raised by the Red Envelope campaign.

XII. ADJOURN

The motion by Mr. Jax to adjourn at 7:39 pm was seconded and passed.

Minutes drafted by Jan Kleinman, Secretary.
Approved by vote of Board on April 20, 2015.