

Developing Global Citizens



英華 | YINGHUA ACADEMY

2023-2024 Annual Report



Safety, Speak Chinese, Learn, Happiness, Global Citizenship

Yinghua Academy 2023-2024 Annual Report

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About Yinghua Academy

History and Mission

When Yinghua Academy opened in 2006, it was the first public charter Chinese immersion school in the U.S. and the first Chinese immersion school in the U.S. Midwest. Language immersion professionals from around the world look to Yinghua, a leader in the field with a track record of outstanding results. Parents from around the Minneapolis and St. Paul metro area look to Yinghua for an outstanding K-8 education and nurturing learning environment. The school typically has kindergarten waiting lists and regularly receives accolades such as first-place rankings through Niche.com.

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.

Innovation

Minnesota charter public schools exist to innovate and share their discoveries, methods, and results. Yinghua has been recognized twice by the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS) for its innovative practices.

Yinghua Academy, the first of its kind

When the school was founded in 2006, curricular materials had to be created to teach Core Knowledge content in Mandarin Chinese. Most of the school's first teaching resources were written by the founding Academic Director Dr. Lien, who has been with the school since its first year. Now in its nineteenth year, Yinghua remains a leader in language immersion education; and school leaders and teachers are frequent presenters in the U.S. and abroad on all manner of immersion-related topics.

Innovation Awards

Yinghua has received two innovation awards from MACS related to increasing and supporting Yinghua students' language and academic performances. In 2016, Yinghua received an innovation award for its new forms of accountability through its pioneering collaboration with the Minnesota Online High School to create three levels of Advanced Chinese online courses for K-8 immersion graduates. A second innovation award, received in 2017, highlighted the end-of-year Academic Performances. These classroom-based events are held in the spring each year, during which students show and share what they know in a performance that integrates Chinese, math, science, and social studies topics.

Developing Global Citizens

In the 2023-2024 school year, Yinghua began implementing strategies to follow the direction laid out in the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. Supported by and based on Yinghua’s mission and core values, the strategic plan identified three initiatives: world class Mandarin immersion, cultivate and equip students for the future world and global workforce, and partnerships and relationships. Throughout the year, students, staff and families took part in various activities and events which reflected these initiatives, with emphasis being placed on student development and preparing students to be global citizens.

Pathway to Bilingualism

According to the International Center for Language Studies, roughly 18.5% of the world’s population speaks English and roughly 13.9% speaks a dialect of Mandarin. A pillar of Yinghua’s mission is to prepare students to be engaged and productive global citizens, which strongly relies on students developing key cultural competence and proficiency in language. When students graduate from Yinghua, they will be equipped with the bilingual skills to speak with 32.4% of the world’s population. In order to provide the highest quality learning experience for students, Yinghua focuses on key areas of Mandarin and English development through the immersion environment, strong teachers, and engaging experiences. To support a quality foundation in Mandarin, Yinghua creates clear language zones within the building to help students have smooth transitions and focus on core subject areas.

In addition to Yinghua’s annual celebrations of Chinese cultural events such as Lunar New Year, various opportunities are offered to all students to celebrate English proficiency. These events include promoting the Accelerated Reader (AR) program; the annual Battle of the Books, where students create teams to read books and participate in fun trivia-style competition; the Spelling Bee; and Yinghua’s Storybook Character Parade, where students and staff dress up as characters from their favorite books to share with the community.



Students dressed as characters from “Paddington” in the Storybook Character Parade.

Connecting with Sister Schools

Yinghua often serves as a model of Chinese immersion education for schools around the world. Yinghua maintains meaningful relationships with a wide variety of other programs nationally and internationally. Internationally, Yinghua has seven sister schools in Taiwan ranging from elementary schools to universities. In China Yinghua has three sister schools including high schools and universities. The interactions that make up these partnerships include student pen pals, visiting one another’s schools, and more.

Hosting Guests from International Organizations

For the past two school years, Yinghua has hosted various university students from Taiwan, who are in the process of becoming teachers, to learn from Yinghua's unique educational environment for a few months at a time. Some of these visiting university students have then graduated and become members of Yinghua's staff, in an effort to create pathways for new teachers to succeed. Throughout the 2023-24 school year, Yinghua hosted 16 students from the National Taipei University of Education, with 10 students visiting during Term 1, three visiting during Term 2, and three visiting during Term 3, along with their professors. During the summer, six students from National Dong Hwa University in Taiwan and their professor visited Yinghua and provided support for Yinghua's two-week immersion summer camp. These students helped campers enjoy Chinese culture lessons and DIY sessions through hands-on activities such as making paper spinners, tasting classic Taiwanese bubble tea, and crafting and flying kites.

Visits from International Delegations

Yinghua received three international delegations during the 2023-24 school year, including Professor Chen-Cheng Chun, Ph.D. and two teachers from the Graduate Institute of Teaching Chinese as a Second/Foreign Language at the National Kaohsiung Normal University. A delegation of Shih Chien University officials from Taipei visited in November 2023, including Dr. Tony Kuo, Vice President for International and Cross-Strait Affairs; Mr. Wang, Director of the Chinese Language Center; and Mr. Hsu, Executive Secretary of the Chinese Language Center. Finally, in March 2024, a delegation of Chinese officials from the Chicago Consulate General of the People's Republic of China toured the school. During these visits, the guests had the opportunity to observe classes, engage in discussions about Yinghua's immersion education approach, and explore potential opportunities for future collaboration.

Summer Trip to Taiwan

Each summer, Yinghua seventh and eighth graders have the opportunity to take part in a two-week study abroad trip to Taiwan or China as a capstone to their Yinghua experience. As part of the June 2024 trip to Taiwan, students and staff visited one of Yinghua's sister schools, New Taipei City Municipal Xintai Junior High School. Yinghua students sat in on classes with Xintai students and participated in activities around the school, while Yinghua staff learned about Xintai and interacted with their staff. Another local school Yinghua students visited was Minzu Elementary School. Students exchanged learning experiences and shared their views of the two different countries. Another cultural exchange school was Kaohsiung Municipal Nanlong Junior High School in the south of Taiwan. Yinghua students also completed home stays with local families as part of this trip, spending time with a Taiwanese student their age and experiencing another culture.



Yinghua staff with Xintai Junior High School staff during the summer Taiwan trip.

Yinghua’s aim in establishing these connections and partnerships is to provide many opportunities for Yinghua students to be engaged in the world around them. As a crucial part of the school’s mission statement is to “prepare our students to be engaged and productive global citizens...”, ensuring that Yinghua maintains a variety of educational relationships is imperative to broadening students’ horizons. The school strives to provide students with experiences that expand their knowledge of the world beyond the classroom through meeting peers from other countries, traveling abroad, and engaging in cultural activities as a few examples.



Yinghua students with Minzu Elementary School students during the summer Taiwan trip.

Chinese Excellence Nationally and Internationally

As a leader in Mandarin immersion education, Yinghua students and staff were recognized for their experience and proficiency by a large number of conferences, competitions, and achievements. Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, Yinghua students participated in a wide variety of competitions and contests through different mediums such as speeches, essays and videos. Yinghua students received many awards and compliments to their language skills, as are noted below roughly listed in order of competition size. The Yinghua students, staff, and community also put together a Lunar New Year celebration each year to offer a unique stage experience to students, while practicing the cultural traditions common when welcoming the new year.

During the 2023-2024 school year, 307 students participated in Chinese competitions and activities hosted outside of Yinghua Academy. Among them, 167 students received awards ranging from first to third place, and all participants boosted their confidence in showcasing their Chinese proficiency.

Lunar New Year Celebration

Yinghua held the annual Chinese New Year performances on Saturday, February 24, at Bethel University’s Benson Great Hall. 2024 is the Year of the Dragon, and the performances had a theme of “心之所向：龙行天下 When Hearts Align: Quest for the Dragon Pearls”. Students and staff embodied this theme throughout the performances in the form of songs, dances, acting out cultural legends, and more. Attendance at the performances totaled 2,235 people, which included family, community members and visiting guests. Yinghua also partners with iDream.TV to offer a livestream of the performances for those unable to attend in person. The livestream had 1,853 views from all across the United States and around the world.



Seventh grade students during the Lunar New Year performances.

The First World Chinese Language Conference

Yinghua was invited to attend the first World Chinese Language Conference in Beijing which was hosted by the Chinese Ministry of Education and other co-organizers from December 7 through December 9, 2023. Yinghua received the 2023 Outstanding Contribution Award in recognition of Yinghua's outstanding educational achievements and students' excellence in Chinese proficiency. Chinese Academic Director Fang Wu attended the conference and accepted the award on Yinghua's behalf.

4th Chinese Bridge – Chinese Show for Foreign Primary School Students

During the 4th Chinese Bridge competition, 15 students were selected to participate in the contest as part of various divisions hosted by China's Consulate General Offices across the U.S. In the Washington division, one Yinghua student was awarded second place, and three Yinghua students tied for third place. As part of the San Francisco division, a Yinghua fifth grader earned third place. Finally, in the Chicago division, a Yinghua first grader won first place in the KG-G2 group and a Yinghua third grader won first place in the G3-G5 group. Additionally, two Yinghua students earned second place as part of the Chicago division in the G3-G5 group. As a result of her outstanding performance, a Yinghua third grader earned the opportunity to represent the Washington Division in China in October 2024, where she competed against talented contestants from across the globe in the finals.

17th Chinese Bridge – Chinese Proficiency Competition for Foreign Secondary School Students

Twenty Yinghua students were selected to participate in the 17th Chinese Bridge proficiency competition for students in grades six through 12, as part of the Washington, Chicago, and San Francisco divisions. In the Washington division, a Yinghua eighth grader won first place, with two fellow Yinghua eighth graders winning second place, and seven Yinghua students earning third place. The one Yinghua student who participated in the San Francisco division placed third, and in the Chicago division, three Yinghua students earned first place with a Yinghua sixth grader placing second. Due to their high Chinese proficiency and success in the contest, a Yinghua eighth grader was chosen to represent the Houston region in the global finals and a Yinghua alumna was chosen to represent the Midwest region in China in October 2024.



Yinghua alumni with their awards at the global finals of the Chinese Bridge competition.

American Academy of International Culture and Education National Chinese Speech Contest

Yinghua had many students participate in various rounds and groups of the American Academy of International Culture and Education (AAICE) National Chinese Speech Contest, and a number of students earned awards for their excellence. In the World Language Group, one Yinghua fifth grader earned first, one fifth grader earned second, and one fifth grader earned third place. Two Yinghua third grade students received honorable mentions.



Yinghua students with their National Chinese Speech Contest awards in front of the school with Dr. Lien and Wu Zhuren.

In the Immersion Program Group for students in grades six through eight, a Yinghua seventh grader earned first, an eighth grader and a seventh grader earned second, and a seventh grader and an eighth grader tied for third place. Four other Yinghua students also received honorable mentions. In the Heritage Group for students in sixth through eighth grade, a Yinghua eighth grader earned first place.

2023 My China Album

The 2023 My China Album was a story-sharing event co-hosted by the Embassy of the People's Republic of China; the Consular General in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago; and the China Daily. Out of the 20 Yinghua students who participated, a Yinghua seventh grader was the youngest winner and won the Outstanding Contribution Award. On May 16, 2024, she gave a speech at the Chinese Embassy.



Yinghua student (back row, second from right) with various guests at the My China Album Event hosted at the Chinese Embassy.

20th National Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools Essay Contest



Yinghua middle school students with their CLASS Essay Contest Awards.

At the start of the 2023-2024 school year, students were encouraged to participate in the 20th National Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools (CLASS) Essay Contest, which had a theme of "Understanding One Another, Caring for One Another". Seventy-three students from second through eighth grade were selected by their teachers to compete in the contest. There were seven students who won gold awards, 15 students who won silver awards and 21 students who received honorable mentions.

Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools Inaugural Chinese Talent Contest

Eleven students submitted works to the inaugural CLASS National Talent Contest which had six categories: singing, dancing, instruments, arts, sports, and language. Yinghua students had great success in multiple categories, with a Yinghua fifth grade student winning first place in the sports category, a Yinghua sixth grader winning first place in the language category, a group of four Yinghua fifth graders winning second in the singing category and another pair of fifth graders winning third place in the singing category.

3rd National Chinese Language Association of Secondary-Elementary Schools Poster Contest

In March 2024, 63 Yinghua students participated in the 3rd National CLASS Poster Contest, which had a theme of “My Favorite Chinese Character”. Six Yinghua students won gold awards, six students won silver awards, and seven students won bronze awards for their posters.

2023 National Chinese EXPO of Student Works

After more than two months and participation by more than 4,000 students from the U.S. and Canada, outstanding works of the selected students were exhibited on an exclusive website. There were 61 students and six student groups from Yinghua that participated in the exhibition. More than 200 student works were showcased live on January 27 and 28, 2024, and from kindergarten through eighth grade, works by 23 Yinghua students and groups were selected to be represented.

Third Annual Chinese Short Video Competition

Seventeen Yinghua students participated in the video contest hosted by the Consulate General of the People’s Republic of China in Chicago with a topic of “My Story with China.” Students wrote about the impact of learning Chinese on their lives and how they have broadened their horizons and gained a new understanding of the world after learning Chinese. Eight Yinghua students received Best Chinese Speaker awards.

2023 Microfilm Festival at the University of Minnesota

Yinghua students in grades six through eight were invited to participate in the 2023 University of Minnesota Microfilm Festival. Students who participated selected a Chinese idiom story to explain and create a story. Four Yinghua students who are siblings submitted a video based on the idiom story “Blessing in Disguise” from ancient China, and their microfilm was selected for the Judges’ Pick Award.



Yinghua students during their award-winning microfilm.

2023 Chinese Bridge Club in Maryland Calligraphy and Painting Competition

Forty-three Yinghua students participated in the 2023 Chinese Bridge Club in Maryland Calligraphy and Painting Competition. A Yinghua fifth grade and a Yinghua eighth grader won the first-class prize award, five students won the second-class prize award, and seventeen students received the third-class prize award. Nineteen more Yinghua students received honorable mentions.

Community Partnerships and Relationships

As is identified in Initiative Three of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, during the 2023-24 school year, Yinghua staff created and supported many opportunities for families to engage with the school. These events ranged from small group discussions to informative sessions, and included a community-wide celebration of diversity organized by the Yinghua Academy Community Association (YACA).

Tea & Talk with Dr. Lien

Tea and Talk sessions with Yinghua's Executive Director Dr. Lien were introduced to families leading up to the beginning of the school year. Throughout the year, Dr. Lien hosted eight one-hour long informal conversations that parents and guardians could attend to ask questions and talk about topics that were important to them. Five of the sessions were focused on grade specific topics, though parents and guardians were invited to attend any meeting regardless of their student's grade. The last three sessions of the year, held in January, March, and April, were general sessions without grade level focuses. All sessions provided members of the Yinghua community time to speak with one another and Dr. Lien to establish meaningful connections through direct interactions. These meetings were well attended and are continuing in the 2024-2025 school year.

Yinghua Academy Parent University

Another addition during the 2023-2024 school year, was three Parent University informational sessions which focused on timely, relevant topics to provide families with information of how to support their student at home and in the school community. The first session, held on October 26, featured Dr. Tara Fortune speaking on the detailed ins and outs of immersion education from her wealth of experience and knowledge. On February 1, the second session was led by CKC Good Food CEO Nancy Close on healthy eating habits, balanced diets, and school meals. The final session of the year on April 30 featured a panel of speakers about maximizing Chinese language skills beyond Yinghua, and included staff from the Chinese Flagship Program at the University of Minnesota, a NSLI-Y Taiwan Resident Director, and an FBI linguist. Across all three sessions, attendance totaled roughly 150 parents and guardians. Moving forward into the 2024-2025 school year, these sessions will continue and the name Parent University has been changed to Yinghua University, to be more inclusive of all members of the Yinghua community.

First Annual International Festival

The Yinghua Academy Community Association created and held the first annual International Festival in the fall of the 2023-2024 school year. The International Festival was a wonderful celebration of the wide range of cultures present in the Yinghua Community. Highlights of the volunteer run and organized event included 15 cultural booths, 18 food booths and a bake sale, a silent auction, various games, and a few cultural performances. This event brought the community together by creating and strengthening relationships, and was a fantastic celebration of diversity at Yinghua!



International Festival team leads after the completed event with Dr. Lien and Yinghua's mascot Blaze.

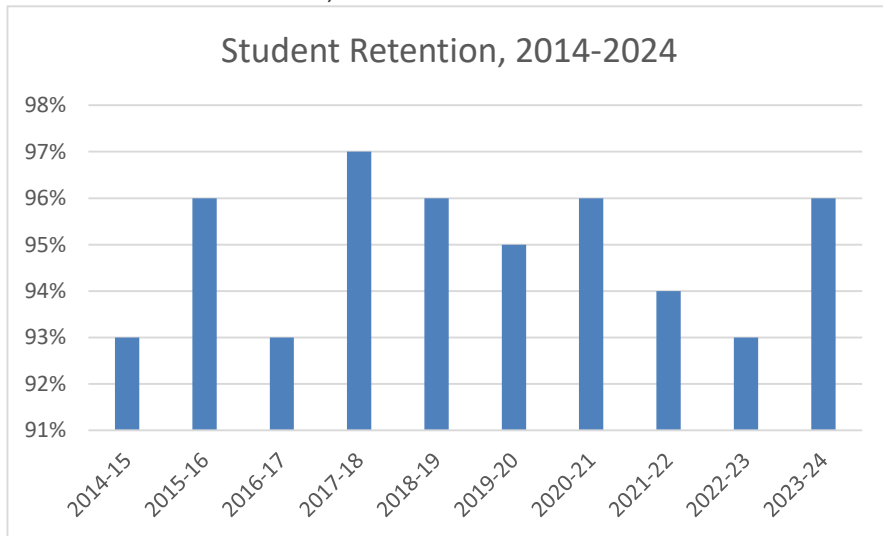
Enrollment, Curriculum and Academic Performance

School Enrollment, Attrition, and Applications for Kindergarten

As a public charter school, Yinghua provides an innovative and successful educational path for all students and is dedicated to a tuition-free, open-access, high-quality education. Yinghua follows state statutes related to application and admission procedures for public elementary schools and complies with the Yinghua Academy Policy 102 Equal Educational Opportunity. Enrollment is open to all students residing in any Minnesota school district. Yinghua accepts all applications without question unless the child does not meet the minimum age requirement for kindergarten. In order to begin kindergarten in the 2023-2024 school year, a student was required to be five years of age on or before September 1, 2023.

October 1, 2023, enrollment at Yinghua Academy was 836 in 31 K-8 homerooms, with four sections KG-3rd, and three sections 4th-8th, and a student-to-teacher ratio of 10:1. The attrition rate was 4%. During the 2023 Open Enrollment period, 135 applications were submitted for 64 of 112 kindergarten openings not filled by siblings.

Table 1: Student Retention, 2014-2024



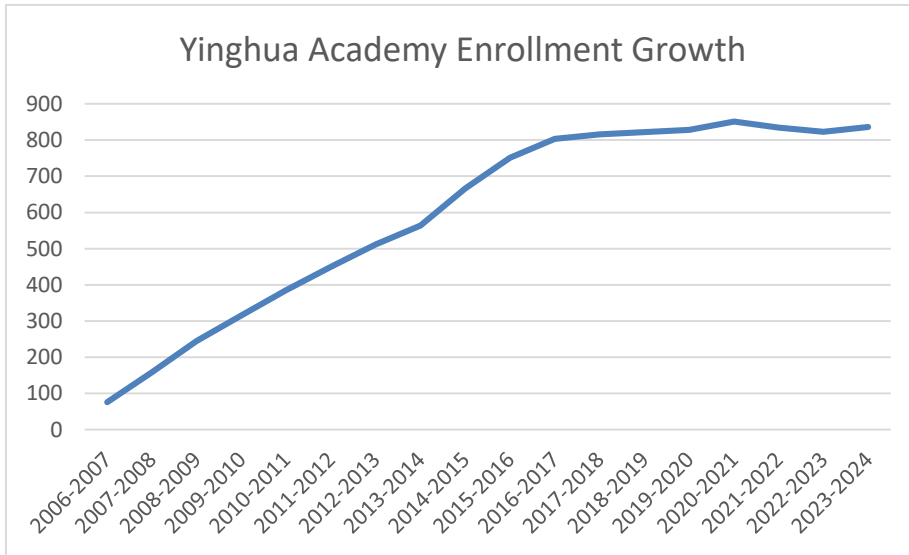
Yinghua opened in the fall of 2006 with 76 students in kindergarten through third grade and grew steadily during its first seven years. Unable to accommodate enrollment demand in 2008, the school moved from its first location in St. Paul to its current facility in Minneapolis on Buchanan Street Northeast.

Further student body and capacity growth ensued which helped meet high enrollment demand and improved the school's financial situation.

Enrollment growth and the 2012-2014 facility expansion

A fourth section of kindergarten was added in 2011, and the school temporarily operated an offsite kindergarten for two years while the Buchanan Street facility was expanded. Enrollment capacity was increased in 2012 in kindergarten, first, fifth, and sixth grades. The facility expansion, a major construction project, resulted in an enhanced and expanded facility with a new gym, library, and cafeteria; two music rooms; a three-story middle school; and an art room, special education offices, and science lab.

Table 2: Yinghua Academy Enrollment Growth



Source: MARSS reports, using enrollment data from ~ October 1 each year.

Enrollment process

The school posts its application procedures and deadlines on www.yinghuaacademy.org by October 1 and explains the process through public tours and open houses. The Open Enrollment (open application) period for the 2023-24 school year ran from January 3 to February 15, 2023, for matriculation in the fall of 2023.

Enrollment applications are time and date-stamped upon receipt by the school. If more applications are received for a grade than space is available, the school holds a public lottery using a computerized random number generator to yield the list of admitted students and, if needed, a waitlist by grade.

Because the number of applications in 2023 was greater than the Board-approved grade-level capacities, the school held a lottery during a public meeting on Saturday, February 18, 2023, at 10 a.m. via Zoom. The lottery was well attended by prospective families.

Based on the lottery, some applicants were offered the opportunity to enroll. The other applicants were placed on a waiting list. After the close of Open Enrollment, Yinghua continued to accept applications for all grades; and when there was no space available in a specific grade, the applicant was placed on the waiting list.

Yinghua Academy abides by Minnesota Statutes, section 124E. The school adheres to YA 010 Admissions and Lottery Policy, which outlines, in section 7a-b, that siblings of enrolled students and children of Yinghua staff may receive enrollment preference. If, during Open Enrollment, the school receives the appropriately completed application of a sibling of a currently enrolled student or child of a Yinghua staff member, the applicant is admitted automatically. This is true even when the admission and enrollment result in the school exceeding the grade-level board-approved capacity. Preference is not given for any other reason. Applications received after the Open Enrollment period were numbered and responded to in the order in which they were received.

Demographics

The school has seen some changes in its enrollment subgroups. Since last year, the ratio of students who qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches decreased slightly from 20% to 16%, and the percent of students using special education services increased slightly from 7% to 8%.

Table 3: Two-Year Demographic Comparison

	2022-23	2023-24
Geography	84 metro ZIP Codes	79 metro ZIP Codes
	52% Minneapolis	51% Minneapolis
	5% St. Paul	6% St. Paul
Ethnicity*	43% Asian Pacific Islander	45% Asian Pacific Islander
	66% Caucasian	67% Caucasian
	8% African American	8% African American
	6% Hispanic/Latino	6% Hispanic/Latino
	2% Native American	2% Native American
English Language Learners	6% ELL	8% ELL
	6% Speakers of Chinese	7% Speakers of Chinese
Free and Reduced Lunch Qualified	20%	16%
Special Education	7%	8%

*For demographic information, families self-identify and can select more than one option for their student’s ethnicity. This leads to the percentage total in Table 3 being higher than 100%.

High School and University Placements

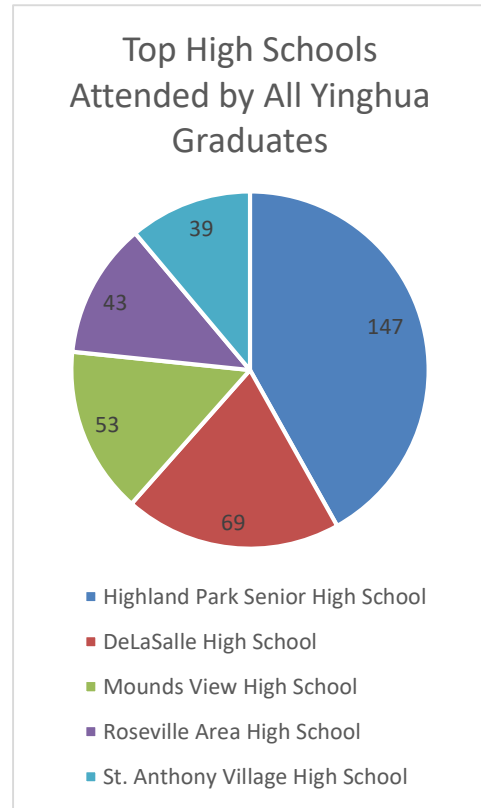
Just as Yinghua students hail from dozens of different Twin Cities ZIP Codes, Yinghua graduates go off to attend dozens of different high schools. Over the years, the school's 630 graduates have selected 77 different public, charter, and private schools for their high school education. Highland Park Senior High School (HPSHS) and Yinghua Academy have an agreement which allows Yinghua graduates to attend HPSHS even if they reside outside of the district. HPSHS offers Chinese Language Arts and Chinese immersion classes at a level that is fitting for Yinghua graduates.

The 83 graduates of the Yinghua Class of 2024 selected the following 27 high schools: Armstrong High School, Breck School, Burnsville High School, Camden High School, Champlin Park High School, Cretin-Derham Hall High School, DeLaSalle High School, Eagle Ridge Academy, Edina High School, Exploration High School, Highland Park Senior High School, Maple Grove High School, Math and Science Academy, Minneapolis Roosevelt High School, Minneapolis Southwest High School, Minneapolis Thomas Edison High School, Minnehaha Academy, Minnetonka High School, Mounds Park Academy, Mounds View High School, Roseville Area High School, St. Anthony Village High School, St. Louis Park High School, St. Paul Academy, St. Thomas Academy, Wayzata High School, and Woodbury High School.

Higher education institutions attended by Yinghua alumni include Minnesota's Augsburg University, Bethel University, Carleton College, Concordia College (Moorhead), Hamline University, St. Olaf College, and the University of Minnesota. Outside of Minnesota: UC Berkeley (CA), Lewis and Clark College (OR), the University of Chicago (IL), Whitman College (WA), Stanford University (CA), Princeton University (NJ), Purdue University (IN), and Yale University (CT).

Yinghua continues to forge relationships with area high schools so that current families are able to make informed choices. Since 2016 Yinghua has hosted a high school panel of administrators from area high schools as a way to build connections and expose current families to an array of educational offerings. On November 29, 2023, Yinghua hosted a high school panel in person, featuring 11 area public, charter, and private schools. The event was well attended by Yinghua middle school parents and students.

Graph 1: Top High Schools



Authorizer

Friends of Education (Friends) (improveK-12education.org) serves as the authorizer for Yinghua Academy and ten more Minnesota charter schools.

Authorizers play an accountability role and provide public oversight for the charter schools they oversee. They do not manage or operate schools, but are responsible for monitoring a school board's oversight of the school. This includes strict financial and academic oversight. By monitoring student testing, conducting site visits, and reviewing annual reports, Friends assesses these three critical areas: academic performance, finance and reporting, and legal compliance. In addition, a common component of Friends' schools is emphasis on foundational skills, critical thinking, data-driven results, and preparation for post-secondary studies.

*Contact Friends of Education:
11100 Wayzata Blvd, Suite 800
Minnetonka, MN 55305
www.improveK-12education.org*

When Yinghua renewed its authorizer contract in the 2023-24 school year, Friends of Education Executive Director Beth Topoluk applauded Yinghua for superior academic performance, achieving 90% of its academic goals, lack of material or significant deficiencies in its external audits, timely reporting and reporting compliance, and transparency in disclosing matters to Friends of Education. FOE awarded Yinghua a contract renewal of five years, the lengthiest period allowed by law; and they have annually made a financial contribution to Yinghua in recognition of the school's outstanding work.

Dissemination of Information

*Minnesota Statutes 124E.17 DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION
§Subdivision 1. Charter school information. (a) Charter schools must disseminate information about how to use the charter school offerings to targeted groups, among others. Targeted groups include low-income families and communities, students of color, and students who are at risk of academic failure.*

Compliance with Minnesota Statutes 124E.17

Yinghua typically hosts weekly tours from late September through late May. At December and January public meetings, Yinghua shares information about how to enroll and how to use the offerings of the school. Yinghua connects with the Northeast Head Start site to encourage families to submit enrollment applications for their children entering kindergarten and uses its website, social media, and flyers to publicize Open Enrollment and the enrollment process.

Yinghua takes seriously its partnership with parents and guardians who are essential to making sure that kindergartners are ready to begin school. Prospective parents of incoming kindergarten students and members of the public tour the school, typically on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. At a December open meeting, parents learn about the school and about immersion education practices. A Saturday morning sample immersion class allows prekindergarten students and their parents or guardians to experience an immersion classroom in January.

Kindergarten Roundup occurs in May and allows families to meet kindergarten teachers and experience a sample lesson, learn about transportation, talk with the Executive Director, and take photos with Blaze the dragon. At the sample class and at Roundup, parents observe as their children, most of whom have no prior Chinese-language exposure, interact with teachers who deliver lessons only in Chinese and speak only Chinese in the presence of students. This year, Kindergarten Roundup was held on April 26 with indoor stations, due to the weather, where eighth grade students and parent volunteers assisted administrators and teachers with activities for visiting children and parents.

To communicate with and retain enrolled families, the school regularly uses the website, weekly newsletters, and phone, text, and email messaging for updates about conferences, tutoring, homework help, and other events and services to facilitate student success. Teachers communicate with families directly via in-person appointments, email, phone, and written notes regarding project due dates, exam preparation, homework, and grades. Teachers and administrators follow up with parents who missed conferences and with the families of any students with accumulated unexcused absences.

Evening events are offered on special topics that are of interest to Yinghua families. Two annual “What’s the Scoop?” events help parents to assist their children with significant school transitions. The first Scoop event is for first grade families who learn about what is expected in formal English Language Arts classes, which begin in second grade. The second Scoop event is for fourth grade families who learn about Middle School; starting in grade five, students switch classes for classes taught by subject specialists. This represents a significant change from the Lower School model of remaining in one classroom for Chinese, math, science, and social studies lessons taught by one homeroom teacher. Finally, as mentioned in a previous section, Yinghua hosts a high school panel which is open to all students and families.

Equity

- A new addition in the 2023-2024 school year was free breakfast and free lunch for all students, regardless of financial need, as part of Minnesota’s Free School Meals program. Yinghua’s average number of lunches served each day increased from 400 meals per day in the 2022-23 school year, to 600 meals per day in the 2023-24 school year. Students are encouraged to take breakfast each morning if they would like when they arrive at school between 8 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

- During the 2023-24 school year, Yinghua did not require families to have Wi-Fi at home. Yinghua provided iPads for students who needed a computer to complete school work. There were 22 iPads for students, as requested by their families. Yinghua provides every Middle School student with their own 1-on-1 laptop during the school year.
- To meet the needs of the 8% of Yinghua students who are English Language Learners (ELL), Yinghua employs an ELL teacher, who meets with small groups of students during the school day for extra English teaching time. ELL support is not a substitute for grade-level English Language Arts (ELA) classes. Rather, it is provided in addition to the six periods per week of ELA in grades two through four, and five periods per week in grades five through eight.
- Financial aid is available to families who express need to cover expenses for extras such as for field trips or retreats. Aftercare discounts are offered to families who qualify for free or reduced-price school lunch and to all families who express a need.
- Yinghua students wear uniforms. Used uniform sales offer uniform pieces for a suggested donation of \$1 apiece. Yinghua adjusts uniform requirements as needed for religious and ethnic considerations.
- During the 2023-2024 school year, Yinghua students came from 79 different Twin Cities ZIP Codes. Yinghua offers nine bus routes to accommodate families. Busing is free to those who reside in the City of Minneapolis and to families from outside the city who can accompany their children to a Minneapolis stop.
- One of the tenets of language immersion education is that diversity is celebrated. Offering multilingualism opens doors for understanding the world from many perspectives. By design, 100% of homeroom teachers are Chinese-speaking and usually of Asian descent. Yinghua strives for increasing ethnic and socio-economic diversity in its enrollment; however, overall change is slow due to sibling privilege (permitted under Minnesota law) and full enrollment.



Yinghua staff members cheering on students during the annual Popsicle Run.

Academic Performance and Charter Contract Goals

This report includes updates on the school's charter contract goals. Progress is assessed in part through analysis of academic results data as measured by the Minnesota Department of Education as the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA), the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), and the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), along with internationally-recognized Chinese language proficiency exams (SOPA, OPI, YCT, and HSK). This year, Yinghua can report on all annual assessments. Data for this section may be viewed here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fwqx4tsfZjOH5LG9LX6oTGm2Y1hzGsk2lv-vWOMICGA/edit?usp=sharing>.

Charter Contract Goals

- 1: State Assessment Tests (40% weight)*
 - 2: Chinese Acquisition (30%)*
 - 3: Nationally-Normed Assessments (15%)*
 - 4: Ready for School (5%)*
 - 5: School Culture (10%)*
-

Goal 1: State Assessment Tests

Sub Goal 1.1: Absolute Proficiency

Goal 1.1 is comprised of two parts. The first being that by the conclusion of FY2023, the school's third-grade proficiency rates for the most recent four years will average no less than two points higher than the state average in reading. For the 2023-2024 school year, Yinghua remained on track to achieve this goal as the third grade student proficiency rate was 59.3%, which is 12.8 points higher than the Minnesota statewide average of 46.5%. At the conclusion of FY2023, Yinghua has achieved this long-term goal with an average of 12.6 points higher than the Minnesota statewide average, though due to the Covid-19 pandemic there is no data for the 2019-2020 school year.

The second piece of Goal 1.1 states that each year the school proficiency rates will exceed the state-average proficiency for the same grades served by the school by at least twenty percentage points in math and science, and by at least fifteen percentage points in reading. In 2024, students did exceed the twenty percentage point target in math with a difference of 34.9 percentage points above the Minnesota state average of 46.9%. In science, the goal was also achieved as the student proficiency rate was 69.8% which was 32 percentage points above the state average. Similarly, in reading, the student proficiency rate was 72.9% which was 23.4 percentage points above the state average, fully meeting the annual goal.

Results: The school met Goal 1.1.

Sub Goal 1.2: Comparative Proficiency - District

Goal 1.2 states: Each year the school will demonstrate higher school-wide proficiency rates than:

- the Minneapolis school district, for the same grades served, for math, reading, and science,

	Math (G. 3-8)		Reading (G. 3-8)		Science (G. 5 & 8)	
	Yinghua Academy	Minneapolis Public Schools	Yinghua Academy	Minneapolis Public Schools	Yinghua Academy	Minneapolis Public Schools
2022	77.4%	33.5%	76.2%	40.5%	65.6%	31.9%
2023	77.5%	35.4%	71.3%	38.1%	59.9%	30.9%
2024	81.8%	46.9%	72.9%	49.5%	69.8%	37.8%

- the combined average of St. Anthony/New Brighton Public Schools and Minnetonka Public Schools for grades 3-8 in math, grades 6-8 in reading, and grades 5 and 8 in science.

	Math (G. 3-8)		Reading (G. 6-8)		Science (G. 5 & 8)	
	Yinghua Academy	St. Anthony & Minnetonka	Yinghua Academy	St. Anthony & Minnetonka	Yinghua Academy	St. Anthony & Minnetonka
2022	77.4%	70.3%	76.2%	71.9%	65.6%	63.9%
2023	77.5%	72.5%	72.2%	71.7%	59.9%	62.2%
2024	81.8%	73.7%	81.5%	72.3%	69.8%	63.7%

As the scores above show, Yinghua Academy successfully achieved higher school-wide proficiency rates in comparison to the Minneapolis school district in math, reading, and science by more than 23 percentage points in each subject. When compared to the combined average of the St. Anthony/New Brighton Public Schools and Minnetonka Public Schools, Yinghua students achieved higher proficiency rates in math by 8.1 points, in reading by 9.2 points, and in science, Yinghua’s school-wide average was above the comparative average by 6.1 points.

Results: The school met Goal 1.2

Sub Goal 1.3: Growth

Goal 1.3 states that as published by the Minnesota Department of Education, each year: either the school’s on-track growth will exceed the state-average on track growth in each reading and math; or **the school’s average percentage of students who maintained or improved achievement levels will exceed the state-average.** In math, Yinghua students achieved this goal with an average percentage of students who improved or maintained at 84.5%, 28.1 percentage points higher than the Minnesota state average. Similarly, Yinghua students exceeded the state average in reading with an average of 81.1% over the state average of 61%.

Results: The school met Goal 1.3

Sub Goal 1.4: Achievement Gap Reduction

Goal 1.4 has two elements related to closing all racial and economic achievement gaps between students. Yinghua's goal includes that each year for each subgroup other than English Learners, for which the school had publicly reportable/sufficient counts: the school's proficiency rate will exceed the state-average proficiency rate for the subgroup for each reading and math. Yinghua reports on two subgroups, Special Education and Free/Reduced Price Lunch. In 2024, both subgroups achieved higher proficiency rates than the state average in math and reading. In math, the Free/Reduced Price Lunch subgroup was 38.5 percentage points above the state average and the Special Education subgroup was 19.2 percentage points above the state average. In reading, the Free/Reduced Price Lunch subgroup achieved a higher proficiency rate than the state average by 27.5% with a proficiency rate of 60.9%, and the Special Education subgroup was above the state average by 7.8% with a proficiency rate of 33.3%.

The second piece of Goal 1.4 is focused on English Learners, stating as published by the Minnesota Department of Education, for each year the school has publicly-reportable/sufficient counts of English-Learner students: the school's English Learners will average higher progress towards target than the statewide average, and the school's percentage of English Learners who met or exceeded their targets will exceed the statewide average. Yinghua's English Learners achieved this goal in both parts, as students averaged 76.6% progress toward the target, 20.2 percentage points higher than the state average, and 53.2% of students met or exceeded their targets which is 24.9 percentage points above Minnesota state average.

Results: The school met Goal 1.4.

Goal 2: Chinese Acquisition

Sub Goal 2.1: Speaking and Listening

Goal 2.1 has two parts that contribute to assessing the Chinese speaking and learning of Yinghua students. The first part states: Each year, the school will administer a Student Oral Proficiency Assessment (SOPA) in at least kindergarten, 2nd grade, and 4th grade, and at least 80% of students will achieve the following proficiency goals:

- Kindergarten: Novice-High
- 2nd grade: Intermediate-Low
- 4th grade: Intermediate-Mid

In the 2023-2024 school year, Yinghua students in kindergarten and 2nd grade were below the 80% goal for their respective proficiency goals, with 61% of kindergartners achieving the Novice-High level, and 71.3% of 2nd graders achieving the Intermediate-Low level. Yinghua's 4th grade students did not meet the goal with 53.5% of 4th graders achieving the Intermediate-Mid proficiency level or above.

The second piece of Goal 2.1 is as follows: Each year, the school will administer an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) in at least grades 6 and 8, and at least 50% of the students who are continuously-enrolled since first grade will achieve Intermediate – Mid and above in sixth grade or Advanced – Low and above in eighth grade (defined by ACTFL). In 2023-2024, Yinghua eighth grade students took the OPI and 34.9% (29/83) of them received Advanced-Low proficiency levels or above. Of the sixth grade students that took the OPI in 2023-2024, 87.8% (65/74) received Intermediate-Medium or above proficiency levels.

The OPI assesses Chinese-language speaking and listening. Among language experts, the OPI is viewed as an ideal tool to assess students' oral proficiency. Yinghua began using this assessment seven years ago to evaluate how older students use language in real-life situations. In administering the tests, Yinghua follows the Language Testing International (LTI) Protocol for OPI assessment which is a 20 to 30-minute one-on-one interview conducted over the phone between the candidate and an ACTFL-trained and certified examiner. The examiner continuously adapts to the interests and abilities of the student and delves into more complex language while rating the speaker's responses.

Yinghua's SOPA and OPI expectations and goals are higher than those of peer schools, but school leaders feel that stretch goals help with planning and teaching. Yinghua used the Lower School rate of progress to predict Middle School results and set goals based on the Lower School track record of continuing to increase by one proficiency level per grade despite the fact that students in Yinghua's grades 6 and 8 have fewer contact minutes with academic subjects taught in Chinese than in younger grades and fewer opportunities to use Chinese in social settings.

Results: The school partially met Goal 2.1.

Sub Goal 2.2: Reading and Writing

Goal 2.2 states each year the school will administer the Youth Chinese Test (YCT) in at least the fifth grade, and at least 80% of fifth grade students will pass YCT Level IV. Additionally, the school will administer the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK) in at least grade 8, and at least 80% of the eighth grade students will pass HSK Level IV.

In 2023-2024, Yinghua made the decision to have all fourth and fifth grade students take the YCT Level IV test, to provide Chinese testing scores as data points for the language proficiency of those grades. Of the 167 students that took the YCT Level IV, 84.4% (141/167) fourth and fifth graders passed the YCT Level IV, successfully achieve this part of the goal. Of the 84 eighth grade students that took the HSK, 59 students passed which is equivalent to 77.78%. This passing percentage falls short of the 80% goal, which Yinghua will use as a marker for student progress and adjust curriculum accordingly.

Results: The school partially met Goal 2.2.

Goal 3: Nationally Normed Assessments

Each year, the school will administer a nationally-normed assessment in at least fourth and eighth grade. In addition, each year, the school's percentage of fourth and eighth grade students who meet or exceed the nationally-normed average for their respective grade, will exceed 50%. In the 2023-2024 school year, Yinghua's fourth and eighth grade students achieved these goals in both subjects by a range of 24.42 to 43.98 percentage points.

Percent of Students Who Met or Exceeded the National Norm (NWEA)				
	2023		2024	
	Math	Reading	Math	Reading
4 th Grade	93.82%	68.29%	88.37%	74.42%
8 th Grade	76.74%	73.25%	93.98%	83.31%

Results: The school met Goal 3.

Goal 4: Ready for School

This goal states that each year 100% of incoming kindergarten students with parental consent will be screened utilizing a kindergarten readiness assessment in their home district. Yinghua received the results of 100% of Early Childhood Screenings completed by incoming kindergartners with parental consent.

Results: The school met Goal 4.

Goal 5: School Culture

Sub Goal 5.1: Professional Development

In 2023-2024, Yinghua provided training and development opportunities for faculty and staff. Before the school year started, Yinghua staff attended Anti-Bias Education and Social Justice Standards sessions, led by Yinghua's English Academic Director Danielle Miller. These four 90 minute sessions included discussion, work in small groups, and ways to further learn about the topics addressed. Staff also had a three hour session on Social Emotional Learning and implementing Second Step curriculum in the classroom. During the period covered by this report, 100% of teachers received professional development.

Results: The school met Goal 5.1.

Sub Goal 5.2: Attendance

Each year, the school will achieve a higher rate of consistent attendance than the state average. Consistent attendance means students who attend more than 90% of the time the student is enrolled. In 2023-2024, the attendance rate was 95.9% by Yinghua students.

Results: The school met Goal 5.2.

Sub Goal 5.3: Chinese Culture

Goal 5.3 states: 100% of students not otherwise excused will participate in both the school's Chinese New Year (CNY) performance and the spring Chinese Academic Performances. CNY participation is required and graded in Term II. This school year, 100% of students participated in the CNY performance and the spring Chinese Academic Performances. The 2024 CNY performances were a highlight, as the Yinghua community celebrated at Bethel University's Benson Great Hall for the performances welcoming the Year of the Dragon. For the spring Academic Performances, Yinghua family members were invited into the Yinghua school building to watch their students perform in their classrooms.

Result: The school met Goal 5.3.

Curriculum

Yinghua's K-8 academic curriculum references Minnesota State Standards, Common Core standards, national standards for foreign language education, and the Core Knowledge Sequence, a systematic model of education in which each successive year of education is built on what children have learned in prior years. The Core Knowledge Sequence is based on the notion that, although current events and technology are constantly changing, a body of lasting knowledge and skills form the core of a strong K-8 curriculum.

Executive Director, Dr. Luyi Lien, has developed and customized the school's curricular materials and leads Yinghua in all curriculum development to ensure that content delivered in Mandarin covers the Core Knowledge Sequence and Minnesota Standards in addition to building Mandarin fluency. It is this internally-created curriculum that has given Yinghua students both a high level of Mandarin fluency and a deep understanding of Core Knowledge content.

Yinghua has captured national and international attention along the way.

2024: Visit from Consul General of China Mr. Zhao and a delegation from the Chicago

Consulate, ranked 2nd best middle school in MN by [Schooldiver.com](https://www.schooldiver.com)

2023: Ranked best charter elementary in Minnesota by [Niche.com](https://www.niche.com)

2022: Visit from Chinese Ambassador Qin Gang, ranked 4th best district in MN by

[Schooldiver.com](https://www.schooldiver.com)

2020: Multiple first-place rankings through [Niche.com](https://www.niche.com)

2016 and 2017: Minnesota Association of Charter Schools innovation awards

2015: National Blue Ribbon recognition by the U.S. Department of Education

2014: Confucius Classroom of the Year by the Chinese Ministry of Education (Hanban)

2008: Foreign Language Assistance Program grant to develop the middle school (\$811,265)

2007: World Language grant for \$100,000 to develop the elementary school (\$100,000)

Chinese Language Arts

The Mandarin Chinese immersion program incorporates both content-based instruction (CBI) and thematic-based instructional approaches. The full early immersion model program that Yinghua adheres to was designed in consultation with the Center for Applied Linguistics and the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition. Yinghua's program is internationally recognized as a dynamic example of language immersion best practices.

Yinghua's Chinese Language Arts curriculum includes modern and classical literature, informational texts, and the foundational skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Topics integrate history, social studies, science, and technical subjects. Classical literacy is incorporated in all grades in a variety of forms to support students' language and cultural understanding. In Middle School, Chinese Language Arts teachers systematically introduce classical Chinese literature to widen the scope of students' Chinese language knowledge and advance their cultural literacy. Chinese Language Arts was also offered to middle school students in Core and Honors to allow for smaller group instruction.

Math

Yinghua uses Singapore Math, an internationally-recognized applied mathematics curriculum which helps students understand the *why* behind concepts in mathematics. Math is taught in Chinese at all grade levels, though the text in Singapore Math workbooks is in English. This permits parents to assist with math homework. Math concepts are understood first in a concrete manner, then students illustrate a problem pictorially, and finally the concepts are represented in mathematical form. In middle school, math is offered in levels: Core and Honors. Each has its own pace in covering material that is at or above grade level.

English Language Arts

In English Language Arts (ELA), the school uses the 2013 Reading Street series (published by Pearson Education, Inc.) as a foundation for grades two through five. This is supplemented with novels, a poetry curriculum, and other primary sources. The program meets the requirement of Common Core Standards, which focus on reading, writing, speaking and listening, and language usage components and aligns with the most current Minnesota State Standards for ELA.

Yinghua delays teaching English until grade two in order to make time to solidify Chinese language skills in kindergartners and grade one students. The Yinghua ELA curriculum is customized for quick "ramp-up" since students begin formal ELA studies two years later than usual. In middle school, the integration of novel studies, essay writing, and project-based learning serves as a multifaceted approach to enhance comprehension, vocabulary, and writing proficiency in both English and Chinese. Novel studies provide an immersive literary experience, enabling students to analyze complex narratives and themes, thereby deepening their comprehension skills in both languages. Through essay writing, students articulate their thoughts and arguments coherently, fostering critical thinking and enhancing their ability to construct sophisticated sentences and paragraphs in English and Chinese.

Science

Yinghua's science curriculum is aligned to the current Minnesota State Science Standards and national standards published by the National Research Council. Yinghua also incorporates core knowledge standards from the Core Knowledge foundation. At the elementary school level (grades K- 4), science is taught in Chinese immersion classrooms. Science at the middle school level (grades 5-8) is taught in English. Elementary and middle school science teachers work together to solidify the sequence of science curriculum from kindergarten through grade eight. The standards incorporate the nature of science and technology, the connection between science and engineering, and earth, life, and physical sciences throughout the grade levels.



Eighth grade students practice chemical reactions.

Middle school science at Yinghua includes the disciplines of Biology, Ecology, Geology, Meteorology, Astronomy, Chemistry, and Physics. Instruction emphasizes both the methods of doing science and the understanding of important science concepts. Students are taught an inquiry method that encourages them to ask questions based on direct observations made from hands-on experiments, academic reading, and multimedia presentations. Students complete research projects as well as design and conduct their own investigations. Important science concepts are constructed and internalized as students make connections between life experiences and classroom learning. Each year, Yinghua hosts a Science and Technology Expo, encouraging students to participate and expand their science knowledge and hands-on experience.

Social Studies

In Social Studies, Yinghua focuses on teaching students how to view historical events using critical thinking skills and how to ask questions and obtain evidence that educates people about the value of these events. Students learn about citizenship, government, economics, geography, and history.

In kindergarten through grade five, social studies is taught in the Chinese immersion classroom where teachers address Core Knowledge topics such as the Thirteen Colonies, U.S. presidential biographies, land formations and geographical terms, European history, and the Inuit and Anasazi cultures, as well as Chinese history and geography topics such as the Qin Dynasty and Emperor Qin Shi Huang; the Han, Tang and Song Dynasties; and the Great Wall and Chinese inventions.

Sixth through eighth graders' social studies courses are taught half in Chinese and half in English depending on the topic. Subjects include Chinese history from mythology and the pre-Qin period to modern and contemporary periods; the great philosophers of Ancient China; Chinese art history; Ancient Greece and Rome; the European Renaissance and Reformation; the American Revolution; the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights; the U.S.-Dakota War from each side's perspective; U.S. immigration; the Great Depression; the Sino-Japanese War; World War II and the Holocaust; global citizenship; the impact of human beings on the environment; and current local, national, and world affairs.

Social Emotional Learning and ADSIS Interventions

Leading into the 2023-2024 school year, Yinghua was awarded an Alternative Delivery of Specialized Individual Services (ADSI) grant to fund three different programs for student support: reading interventions, math interventions, and behavior/organization interventions. As part of these interventions, students received support in small groups, with specific groupings based on their skill needs that required extra attention from Yinghua teachers. Yinghua hired four additional intervention staff who worked closely with students to provide these supports to help them succeed.

The school also used funding from the ADSIS grant to implement focused social-emotional learning in classes and in small groups, which was based on Second Step Social-Emotional Learning Programs. A highlight of social-emotional learning programming was weekly advisory groups for students in grades five through eight. In advisory, each grade would be split into groups of eight to ten students, who would meet with a staff advisor to complete activities which aligned with the week's social-emotional theme. Advisory groups also changed three times throughout the school year, to help students create positive and meaningful connections with their classmates and a Yinghua staff member. Activities included interactive ways to set goals, talking about and identifying emotions, teamwork, and addressing conflict among a variety of social-emotional focuses. The primary goal of the advisory groups was to help students connect with a caring adult at school and establish a supportive peer group where students could help support each other.



Sixth grade students doing an activity during a morning advisory group.

Classes with specialists

Yinghua recognizes the connections between overall academic achievement and student exposure to specialty subjects such as art, music, and physical education, and maximizes student exposure to these subjects. Monthly whole school “theme webs” interweave language, content, and culture objectives in all classes. Students practice music, visual art, and physical education in purpose-built, customized facilities with teachers who are specialists in these areas.

Music

Music education is delivered either in Mandarin or in English. During the lower school years, students read, write, analyze, describe, and move to music. They are introduced to different types of music, music theory, singing, and playing instruments. Kindergartners have 60 minutes per week of music; grades one through eight each have two 50-minute periods per week. Every fourth grader makes a music instruction choice—they may choose a string instrument (violin, viola, cello, or bass) and receive instruction during music class. Students may also choose vocal music and participate in a choir where professional singing techniques are taught. After fourth grade, students elect to participate in choir, orchestra, or general music and meet twice a week for practice during music class. A Conservatory of Music offers after school lessons to more than 100 students in Western instruments such as violin and piano as well as Chinese instruments such as dizi and hulusi.

Visual Art

The art curriculum utilizes Discipline Based Art Education which introduces drawing, painting, printing, collage, and sculpture and emphasizes art criticism and history. The art studio has a full wall of south-facing windows, ample workspace, and a kiln. Students are encouraged to question and discuss what they see and create, and they apply their classroom knowledge during trips to museums and art studios. This multi-layered engagement with the visual arts encourages students to apply the observation and analysis skills they acquire in other classes. Kindergartners have two 30 minutes periods per week of art while students in grades one through eight each have 50 minutes per week.

Physical Education

Physical education (PE) at Yinghua aligns with National Association for Sport and Physical Education standards and emphasizes participation, sportsmanship, skills, character education, and safety. Students exercise in a gymnasium (nearly 8,000 square feet) as well as in the expansive Northeast Park with multiple playing fields. Students use roller-blades, bikes, cross country skis, snowshoes, and sleds. Health is integrated into the PE curriculum across grades with extra classes focusing on maturation and healthy choices taught by science and PE faculty in fifth and eighth grades. Kindergartners have three 30-minute classes while all other students enjoy two 50-minute periods per week.



A staff member and student during the annual PE Wheels Week.

Technology

Technological learning is integrated into classroom learning and also is taught as a distinct discipline. Middle school students have school-issued laptops. Assignments in science, English and social studies may be issued via laptop and texts often are provided via this medium. Students learn keyboarding and learn to use websites for research in class. At all ages, Chinese teachers use web-based tools such as iChinese Reader and VoiceThread. Students used technology to communicate with sister schools in China and Taiwan. They either utilized apps for real-time interaction or exchanged video stories to share their experiences.

Extracurricular activities

Yinghua offers a wide range of fee-based after school programming including sports, music lessons, and clubs. Students enrolled in the basic after school program, from 3:30 to 6 p.m. on school days, may go to Homework First, the playground, or library. Students may also register for special after school Enrichment classes such as nature crafts, chess, theater, or sports. Some after-school instructors are Yinghua teachers and staff, while others are community members or teachers from outside organizations.

Yinghua is a member of the Minnesota Urban Debate League and its Dragon Debate Team, coached by parent volunteers, saw many successes in the 2023-2024 school year. In other creative endeavors, Yinghua students participated in a wide variety of enrichment opportunities including various forms of dance, drama, sewing, and classes using clay. All of these activities align with the school's strategic goal to reinforce self-directed, critical thinking and curious learning.



Students with their trophies after success in a debate tournament.

Yinghua's after school Conservatory of Music offers 30-minute private music lessons taught once per week by professional musicians with extensive performance experience. Instruments offered include viola, piano, percussion, guitar, ukulele, double bass, and cello. Conservatory students perform at a year-end recital.

In Athletics, Yinghua offers in-house sports for students in first through fourth grade and traveling teams for students in grades five through eight. Younger students may select from soccer, floor hockey, basketball, track and field, and a sports sampler. Yinghua participates in a conference of similar-sized schools which offers Middle School students the opportunity to compete. Middle School students have access to sports such as soccer, volleyball, basketball, cross country running, cross country skiing, track and field, badminton, and pickleball; and new sports are added if there is sufficient interest and coaches are available.

Overview of language by grade

The full immersion model is used in kindergarten and grade one which means that core subject areas—math, science, social studies, and language arts—are taught in Mandarin Chinese.

In grades two and three, the full immersion model is used for the core subject areas, and students study English language arts for approximately 300 minutes per week. Teachers walk their students from the immersion homerooms to the English language area of the building. This practice is in keeping with the principle of language separation in lower grades, an immersion best practice: school settings are customized and outfitted according to the language of teaching. In the Yinghua immersion classroom, students are surrounded by Chinese language on wall posters, in books, and in teaching tools and classroom games. Likewise, in the English classrooms, the posters, books, and learning materials are all in English.

In middle school, the amount of time in classes taught in English gradually increases. By grade eight, courses are divided evenly between Chinese and English. Middle school classes taught in Chinese include Chinese language arts, math, part of social studies, music, and orchestra. Classes taught in English include English language arts, science, part of social studies, art, and physical education. In fifth grade, students receive 70% of instruction in Mandarin and 30% in English. During sixth and seventh grade, this ratio shifts to 60% Mandarin and 40% English. In their final year at Yinghua, eighth grade students receive instruction in an even 50% split of Mandarin and English.



Executive Director Dr. Lien greets kindergarten students in her office during the first week of school.

Governance and Management

Strategy and Governance

2023-2026 Strategic Plan

Initiative 1: World Class Mandarin Immersion

Initiative 2: Cultivate and Equip Students

Initiative 3: Partnerships and Relationships

The 2023 strategic planning process yielded positive community engagement and discussion. The School Board and Executive Director collaborate to take responsibility for setting and evaluating strategic initiatives and monitoring strategy implementation. The Executive Director reports on progress at monthly School Board meetings. Though the timeframe of the most recent strategic plan is described as 2023-2026, many of the goals are ongoing and work to achieve them is continuous. Yinghua's goal is to act strategically on an ongoing basis.

As a public school, Yinghua is licensed by the State of Minnesota. A charter public school is an independent public school governed by a school board (also known as a board of directors). Yinghua follows all Minnesota public education standards including the open meeting law. Meeting information is shared via the school's master calendar which is published on the school website. School Board minutes that have been approved by vote of the School Board are posted on the website.

School Board

The Yinghua Academy School Board consists of up to 13 members who are elected to three-year terms by the parents, staff, and board members of the school. The Board consists of accomplished people who represent one of three constituencies: licensed Yinghua teacher; Yinghua parent/guardian; or community member. Yinghua's bylaws require that it have at least one person from each of these three groups on the School Board at all times.

Following are the definitions of board member categories:

- Teacher: a licensed teacher employed at Yinghua Academy as a teacher
- Parent/guardian: a parent/guardian of a student enrolled at the school; the parent/guardian may not be an employee of the school
- Community member: an individual who is neither a teacher employed at Yinghua nor a parent/guardian of a student enrolled at the school

The primary responsibilities of a School Board are to:

- *Carry out the school's mission and goals*
 - *Evaluate how charter contract goals and commitments are executed*
 - *Evaluate student achievement, postsecondary and workforce readiness, and student engagement and connection goals*
 - *Ensure effective planning*
 - *Set policy that will ensure the school's ongoing viability, and*
 - *Oversee the monthly and long-term financial management of the school*
-

School Board elections

Yinghua holds annual School Board elections in the spring. Each parent and legal guardian of a child currently enrolled at Yinghua, each current employee of the school, and each current Yinghua board member is eligible to vote. Per the bylaws, nominations are solicited at least 60 days before the election period opens. Nominations come from teachers, parents and guardians, and community members. Newly-elected board members are seated to the board on July 1.

Elected members and volunteers serving on committees each have a school email address for board and school-related communication. Board and board committee email addresses follow this pattern: firstname.lastname@yinghuaacademy.org. Biographies of board members can be found on the Yinghua website at yinghuaacademy.org/about/board-of-directors/board-members.

2023-2024 School Board election timeline

- February 22, 2024: Call for nominations.
- March 26, 2024: Voters received information about the nominees including biographical information and candidate category (parent/guardian of a currently enrolled student, licensed teacher currently employed at Yinghua, or community member who is neither a parent nor a member of staff).
- April 25, 2024: Annual School Board meeting with candidate introductions. This meeting was conducted in person with written and video recorded statements by candidates posted on the school website the next day.
- April 25-May 2, 2024: Election period. Voting occurs via US Post and via electronic ballot.
- May 6, 2024: Election results announced.

The 2023-2024 Yinghua Academy School Board included one teacher, three community members, and six parents: Nathan Bode, Secretary, parent; Colleen Ebinger, parent; Paul Haller, community member; Barbara Knott, parent; Andrew Lawton, parent; Cindy Moeller, Chair, community member; Charles Robinson, Treasurer, parent; Amanda Schneider, parent; Pamella Stommies, licensed teacher (#6593) and Yinglu Zeglin, community member. The Executive Director serves on the Board, *ex officio*.

Committees

All board members must chair or serve on at least one committee of the board. In accordance with school bylaws, committees do not have decision-making authority. Rather, these active working groups conduct research and make recommendations to the School Board at regular board meetings. Committee chairs are encouraged to recruit members from the Yinghua parent and teacher community and may also recruit from outside the Yinghua community, particularly if special skills are needed.

Committee mission statements

- **Development Committee:** Develop a long-term fundraising plan, cultivate prospects, and provide oversight for the school’s two annual giving campaigns (Fall Fundraiser and Red Envelope) in partnership with the CEO/Executive Director and YACA (Yinghua Academy Community Association).
- **Finance/Facilities Committee:** Assist the Yinghua School Board and CEO/Executive Director to ensure effective allocation of financial resources and timely and accurate reporting to meet long-term financial goals including facility planning and maintenance.
- **Governance Committee:** Assume primary responsibility for matters pertaining to Board recruitment, nominations, orientation, training, and evaluation in accordance with the bylaws of Yinghua Academy as well as established policies and practices approved by the Board. Assist the Board with policy development and oversight.
- **Personnel Committee:** Assist the Yinghua School Board and the CEO/Executive Director in ensuring that Yinghua’s human resource policies and practices (including but not limited to compensation, benefits package, and school culture) support Yinghua’s ability to recruit, hire, and retain high quality teachers and staff.

Monthly board meeting attendance

Table 5: 2023-2024 Attendance rate by School Board members at School Board meeting

Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Annual Meeting	May	Jun
N/A	100%	81%	100%	100%	63%	90%	100%	90%	90%	90%	90%	67%

School Board training

All Yinghua Academy School Board members have completed mandatory training for charter school board members which includes instruction on Data Practices.

Yinghua Academy Community Association and Dragon Life Organization

The parent association, called YACA which is short for Yinghua Academy Community Association (YACA), and a student group called Dragon Life Organization (DLO) do not have school governance responsibility but both work to build community. YACA supports the Executive Director’s vision, and Dragon Life is facilitated and supervised by the Student Activities Specialist. YACA was founded by parent volunteers during the first year of the school’s existence in order to promote enrollment and raise funds. In 2011, the group incorporated as a Minnesota nonprofit to facilitate fundraising. YACA’s focus is on supporting teachers and students, and annually they coordinate book fairs, meals for teachers during conferences, classroom volunteers, merchandise sales, and fundraisers. Dragon Life is a vibrant student group which organizes student-led service projects, dances, “late-nights,” reading with younger students, helping with school events, and other programs which engage Middle School students with Lower School peers for social activities.



DLO students reading to kindergartners during “Reading Buddies”.

School Leadership

The school administration consists of the Executive Director, Academic Directors, and the Student Behavior and Family Liaison. The primary responsibility of the Executive Director is to lead and direct the implementation of the mission and policy across the school. The Executive Director reports directly to the School Board. All other school employees report to the Executive Director. Each of these professionals brings extensive experience in education and a passion for the mission of the school.

Luyi Lien, Ph.D. 连校长 (Lien Xiaozhang), CEO/Executive Director

Dr. Luyi Lien, Executive Director at Yinghua Academy, has been an integral part of the school since its inception in 2006. Her journey at Yinghua Academy spans a myriad of roles, including classroom teacher, curriculum writer, textbook author, and Academic Director. Before joining Yinghua, Dr. Lien was a published author and essayist in her native Taiwan. With an unwavering commitment to excellence, Dr. Lien's remarkable 18-year tenure has played a pivotal role in shaping Yinghua's robust immersion curriculum.

Dr. Lien consistently strives to provide exceptional educational opportunities to students. Always looking ahead, she develops innovative programs that not only expand students' horizons, but also enhance their collaborative skills.



Dr. Lien is internationally renowned within the immersion education community. She has been a distinguished speaker at prestigious conferences, including the National Chinese Language Conference (NCLC), ACTFL, and the STARTALK conference. She has been invited to address audiences in China, Taiwan, Singapore, and Canada. Dr. Lien shares her expertise by consulting with new immersion schools, guiding them in the development of their curricula, and serving on the advisory boards of multiple language learning organizations. Her collaborative leadership style serves as a model, fostering a community of learning that combines excellence with well-being and happiness. Dr. Lien's leadership promises to further elevate Yinghua Academy's renowned reputation and enduring impact on the world of immersion education.



[Danielle Miller, English Academic Director](#)

Danielle Miller has worked at Yinghua for four years. As English Academic Director, her goal is to foster a school climate that focuses on maximizing students' full potential while developing them into moral citizens. Over the past thirty years, Ms. Miller has had professional experiences that span over three continents and include working at an urban school district, a suburban school district, three different private college preparatory schools, and a Chinese immersion school. Through these endeavors, she has had the opportunity to experience the school through the eyes of a teacher, an administrator, and a parent. Ms. Miller's teaching experience ranges from teaching students in first grade up to eighth grade. She has taught ELA, math, social studies, science, and English as a second language.

[Fang Wu, 吴主任 \(Wu Zhuren\), Chinese Academic Director](#)

Wu Zhuren has worked for Yinghua Academy for more than 16 years. She graduated from Tianjin Normal University in school management in China and has had over seventeen years of experience with extensive training in the field of education before coming to the United States. Wu Zhuren taught second grade for eleven years at Yinghua Academy starting in 2007, and she is proud to watch them grow both academically and as strong individuals throughout their years here. The thing Wu Zhuren enjoys the most is seeing how young students have grown to enjoy learning and speaking Chinese with the support of teachers and parents in the Yinghua community. Wu Zhuren works with teachers to improve the quality of lessons and the quality of students' education, serving as mentor and role model, helping teachers stay fresh and use the latest techniques and technologies in their classrooms. She collaborates closely with Dr. Lien, and her fellow Academic Director to ensure that students are receiving the best experience while learning at Yinghua.





Sherry Edwards, Student Behavior and Family Liaison

Ms. Edwards (Ms. E) has been a staff member since 2019. She is a former elementary teacher who taught 4th through 7th grade. She has a passion for working with children and enjoys helping to empower them for success. Ms. Edwards operated the Yinghua Aftercare Program for 4 years until taking her current position as Student Behavior and Family Liaison. She works closely with students to assist them in turning what may be negative behaviors into positive learning experiences. Ms. Edwards is also the family liaison and will assist and provide support with any concerns they may have. Ms. Edwards is also the building safety officer and is responsible for planning and implementing all fire and lockdown drills throughout the school year.

Ting-Wen Chen, Ph.D., Special Education Coordinator

Dr. Chen has been a part of the Special Education team at Yinghua since the 2014-2015 school year. She became a special education teacher after graduating from the National Changhua University of Education in Taiwan in 2005. She later received her Ph.D. degree in Educational Psychology at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities in 2014, with a major in Special Education and a minor in Quantitative Methods in Education. Dr. Chen has successfully case managed a variety of students with Specific Learning Disabilities, Other Health Disabilities, Developmental Cognitive Disabilities, and Autism Spectrum Disorder in the past. Her primary role evolved into completing comprehensive special education evaluations over the last five years. Through conducting evaluations, Dr. Chen had the opportunity to get to know each student who has been receiving special education services and to support case managers in developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) by considering students' strengths and learning needs.



Incoming Administrators

In the transition to the 2024-2025 school year, two personnel changes occurred at the Administrator level. At the end of the 2023-2024 school year, Danielle Miller decided to pursue a new exciting career opportunity and Lori Magstadt, who was working at Yinghua as a part-time Instructional Coach, was hired to become Yinghua's new English Academic Director. The Chinese Academic Director was split into two positions, Lower School Chinese Academic Director and Middle School Chinese Academic Director to allow for more individualized support of teachers and continuous growth to the student learning experience. Fang Wu's title changed to Middle School Chinese Academic Director following the 2023-2024 school year, and experienced Yinghua teacher Shu-Mei Lai was promoted to Lower School Chinese Academic Director.

Professional Development Plan

In Minnesota, charter school leaders who do not hold an administrative license must share their professional development plans in the school's annual report. Below is the professional development plan that the Executive Director followed during the 2023-2024 school year.

Professional Development Plan
Academic Year 2023-2024
Dr. Luyi Lien, CEO/Executive Director

Objective: To establish a sustainable management strategy while enhancing leadership capabilities, fostering professional relationships, and supporting directors in immersion education.

Goal 1: Establish a Sustainable Executive Role and Mentorship for Long-Term Job Management

- **Identify and Engage a Mentor:** Secure a mentor with expertise in executive leadership and sustainable practices within the education sector to provide guidance on management strategies.
- **Regular Mentorship Meetings:** Schedule bi-monthly meetings with the mentor to discuss progress, address challenges, and refine sustainability strategies.
- **Stay Updated with Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS) Network:** Attend weekly MACS charter school director calls every Tuesday to stay informed about policies and updates, and implement relevant changes into the school's operational strategy.

Goal 2: Streamline Responsibilities and Empower Leadership for Workplace Efficiency

- **Clarify Roles:** Work with staff to clearly define and delegate responsibilities for optimal efficiency.
- **Mentor New Administrators:** Develop a strategic plan to guide and mentor new administrators until they can operate independently.
- **Leadership Retreats:** Organize retreats for team-building, collaboration, and strategic planning among the executive team.
- **Feedback Loop:** Implement regular feedback sessions to assess leadership effectiveness and adjust strategies to improve team dynamics.

Goal 3: Build and Strengthen Relationships Within and Outside the School

- **Regular Team Member Meetings:** Hold one-on-one meetings with team members to discuss roles, challenges, and areas for improvement.
- **Facilitate Team-Building Activities:** Schedule weekly team-building sessions to enhance interpersonal relationships and collaboration within the team.
- **External Networking:** Maintain professional connections outside the school to access new learning opportunities and strengthen a professional support network.

Goal 4: Support Directors in Immersion Education Development

- **Professional Development Workshops:** Provide immersion-focused workshops for leadership, focusing on best practices in immersion education.
- **Regular Check-ins and Tailored Resources:** Conduct periodic check-ins with directors to assess their needs and provide targeted resources to improve their leadership and program development.

Goal 5: Enhance Communication and Alignment

- **Weekly Leadership Meetings:** Schedule weekly or bi-weekly leadership meetings to review projects, discuss challenges, and align strategic goals across departments.
- **Encourage Cross-Department Collaboration:** Promote joint projects across departments to build cross-functional teams, enhance innovation, and foster shared ownership.

Goal 6: Maximize Networking with Immersion Experts and Develop Fundraising Opportunities

- **Represent Yinghua as a Model Immersion School:** Continue representing Yinghua Academy nationally, supporting other immersion programs, and contributing to field improvement initiatives.
- **Maximize Networking Opportunities:** Actively engage with international scholars, education professionals, and prominent educators at events like the National Chinese Language Conference (NCLC) and ACTFL to stay updated on cutting-edge practices.
- **Connect with Fundraising Experts:** Cultivate relationships with fundraising experts and business partners to develop future fundraising strategies for the school.

Staffing

The Yinghua teaching staff is selected using a three-tiered process. The first step is an interview with the hiring committee. Next, the candidate teaches a sample lesson. The last step is a final interview with the administrative team to review the job description, policies, procedures, salary, and benefits.

The Yinghua staff (full-time and part-time) totaled 137 in the 2023-2024 school year with a student-to-teacher ratio of 10:1. Teacher retention between the 2022-2023 school year and the year of this report was 79%.

Yinghua teachers and educational staff are reviewed three times during the school year. Teachers submit weekly lesson plans to the Academic Directors for review. The weekly lesson plans form the building blocks of grade-level curriculum collaboration. Teachers attend weekly lesson planning meetings with grade-level and subject-matter teams.

Every teacher participated in professional development, and 82% hold advanced degrees in their fields, including four with doctoral degrees. Of the 63 teachers, 61 served in full-time roles. In addition to the teachers, 20 other instructional staff members, including Interventionists, Educational Assistants, and Special Education Paraprofessionals, supported the educational environment. Yinghua also employed 21 full-time non-teaching staff and 28 part-time non-teaching staff. For the 2023-2024 school year, there were four administrators. Last year, as Yinghua was not fully staffed, the teacher retention rate was 79%, influenced by various factors impacting employment decisions. Over the past five years, the average retention rate has consistently been 80%.

To review staffing data, click the link to find sheets with full time and part time teaching assignments and related data:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1GsA2VKAqbSTdMNQA4qVFA0RpAr2HOoIRXjGJBoylLXY/edit?usp=sharing>

Financial Performance

The school's budget creation process, used for many years, is mature, deliberate, and methodical. Yinghua takes a conservative approach towards budget creation and implementation.

Budget creation

The budget creation process begins in the winter of the prior year when the Executive Director, the Business and HR Manager, and the school's financial management services group, CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA), propose a budget for the following year. Input from other administrators and teaching staff is collected and prioritized for inclusion during the budget creation process. Consideration is given to academic and operational needs. CLA prepares projections of enrollment and expenses.

The budget then undergoes a thorough review and vetting through the Finance and Facilities Committee to develop and address any questions and concerns. Input and agreement in direction are determined as the changes are incorporated into the draft budget, and a draft is presented to the full board for review and approval based upon the recommendation of the Finance and Facilities Committee. The Board provides suggestions before the final budget is approved in the spring for the following fiscal year.

Implementation of the Board-approved budget

The Executive Director, together with the school's Business and HR Manager, implement the Board-approved budget for the year. School administrators engage the help of CLA to ensure that projected revenues are meeting budget expectations. The Executive Director exercises prudent discretion to execute the budget and has authority to manage expenses within budget parameters.

Yinghua Academy has many internal controls to manage the school's fund and cash operations in order to reduce the risk of inadvertent loss through human error or negligence. The Executive Director authorizes all expenses, the Board Treasurer reviews and approves them, and CLA makes payments. This creates a separation of duties between the entities. The school maintains a close working relationship with CLA while executing the budget. The Treasurer and the Finance and Facilities Committee worked closely with school administrators and CLA to ensure a successful financial year.

Monitoring and reporting

The school's financial documents are closely reviewed on a monthly basis through the Finance and Facilities Committee. Committee members review and inspect the financials and challenge items that may be inconsistent with the budget. The Board Treasurer presents a monthly update at each regularly scheduled board meeting providing full transparency to the School Board, staff, and community. Yinghua provides copies of public documents to fulfill regulatory and contractual obligations and to any interested external entities.

Fiscal Year 2023-2024

The audited FY2023 books showed a fund balance of 30% of expenditures and the unaudited FY2024 books forecast a fund balance of 29%.

Yinghua Academy continued normal operations in fiscal year 2024 except for the food service program. The school implemented a new food service program that aligns with the Free School Meals for Kids law that took effect on July 1, 2023. This new food service program led to higher than usual costs and revenues in the program due to student participation. Yinghua Academy also used the remaining of their ESSER award in fiscal 2024 on summer learning and supporting lost instructional time. With the higher than normal aid increase, the school chose to apply those additional funds to staffing and teacher retention.

Enrollment is predicted to remain stable in the coming school year due to the continued addition of a fourth kindergarten section and consistent retention numbers. Yinghua’s Academy fund balance has remained stable with the minimal fluctuations in the enrollment numbers.

Table 6: General Fund (FD 01) Balance History

2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Audited	Audited	Audited	Audited	Unaudited	Projected
28%	26%	25%	30%	29%	29%



A first grade student counts fake coins to purchase a snack during the annual “night market”

Table 7: Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2024 (unaudited)

		Description	
Assets	Cash		\$2,636,432
	Accounts Receivable		\$0
	State Aid Receivable		\$1,267,554
	Federal Aid Receivable		\$184,458
	Prepaid Expenses and Deposits		\$19,295
	Prior Year State Receivables		\$0
	Due from Other Funds		\$0
	Total Assets		\$4,107,739
Liabilities	Salaries and Wages Payable		\$478,251
	Line of Credit		\$0
	Accounts Payable		\$301,950
	Payroll Deductions and Benefits Payable		\$113,254
	Unearned Revenue		\$35,654
	Total Liabilities		\$929,109
	Fund Balance		\$3,178,630

Table 8: Statement of Revenue and Expenditures

	Description	Un-Audited
Revenues	State Revenues	\$9,302,051
	Federal Revenues	\$305,339
	Other Revenues	\$988,997
	Donations and Gifts	\$78,740
	Food Service	\$688,604
	Total Revenues	\$11,363,731
Expenditures	Salaries and Benefits	\$6,348,885
	Building Lease and Operating Expenses	\$1,270,536
	Programming, General Administrative	\$2,139,121
	Food Service	\$686,949
	Community Service (Yinghua Care)	\$682,728
	Total Expenditures	\$11,128,219
	Surplus (Deficit)	\$235,512
Fund Balance	Beginning Fund Balance	\$2,943,118
	Committed Fund Balance	
	Add Surplus (Deficit)	
	Ending Fund Balance	\$3,178,630
	Combined Fund Balances Percentage	29%

Raising Funds and Connecting with Alumni

In July 2019, Yinghua invested in its fundraising infrastructure by retaining database consultant Stacy Lowell of Insight Giving to upgrade the tools used to cultivate, steward, and recognize donations, keep in touch with the school’s growing alumni population, and engage volunteers in the life of the school.

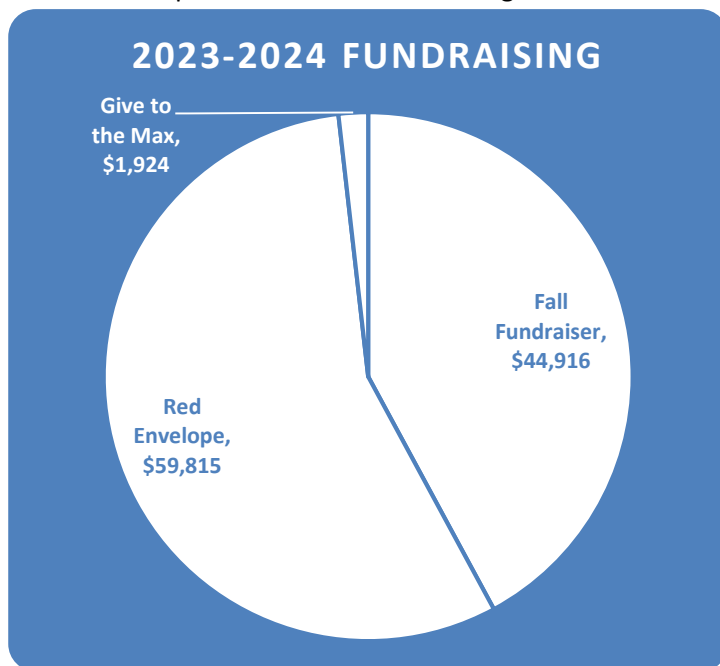
Two groups of volunteers work with the Executive Director to set fundraising priorities and direction—the School Board’s Development Committee and the board of directors of the parent association, YACA. The school’s Communication and Development Coordinator works with both groups to execute campaigns, track donations, cultivate prospects, and steward donors. Funds are raised from individual and foundation sources, workplace matching gifts, and grants.

In 2023, the fall fundraising campaign was held in October and was a joint fundraiser between the school and YACA raising funds to support field trip transportation, indoor recess materials, and two full wall

whiteboards for creative learning. To help keep the cost of field trips low for families, Yinghua received generous support from the Yinghua Academy Community Association (YACA) throughout the school year. The kick-off event of the fall fundraising campaign was YACA’s first annual International Festival, a community-wide event held on October 7 to celebrate the diverse cultures present in the Yinghua community. The event included various foods and baked goods, games, cultural booths, and a silent auction all supported by volunteers. The International Festival was very well-attended raising roughly \$25,000.

The Red Envelope fundraising campaign coincides with Chinese New Year, and the school’s annual CNY performances provide the perfect opportunity to remind parents and other supporters of the value of their engagement with the school through donating and volunteering. In 2024, the Red Envelope Campaign focused on raising funds to support the purchase of indoor recess equipment, cover field trip transportation, and support teacher well-being. With creative guidance and assistance from a Yinghua parent, three staff members and a Yinghua alumna performed a short skit raising awareness of the Red Envelope Campaign during the CNY performances.

Graph 2: 2023-2024 Fundraising



Alumni

Connecting with Yinghua graduates is increasingly important as the alumni population grows and many of the school's eldest students conclude their university years and enter the workforce. Equipping Yinghua graduates to continue to develop their Chinese language skills is ongoing work. Yinghua held the second annual alumni reunion event on December 30, from 5-7:30 p.m. to reconnect with alumni and hear stories of their learning experiences post-Yinghua. During the event, Yinghua alumni shared a meal, completed activities, and discussed the creation of a formal alumni association. The event was well attended over 100 alumni and Yinghua plans to host more alumni events in the future.

Future Plans

The 2023-2024 school year presents significant opportunities Yinghua enters the second phase of the strategic plan. While Yinghua continues supporting students in regaining pre-pandemic academic performance, the focus will be on strengthening the academic program, enhancing staff and teacher well-being, promoting social-emotional learning, refining immersion education, and building relationships for future opportunities.

Prioritizing Teaching and Learning Excellence

Yinghua's primary objective remains enhancing the essentials of teaching and learning. The school will review the current performance and identify areas for growth to make the school even stronger. Key initiatives include providing professional coaching and targeted training for teachers, focusing on best practices. Additionally, Yinghua will ensure that students' learning environments are optimized, balancing academic rigor with physical activities and brain breaks to enhance cognitive function. Curricula and lessons will be adjusted to ensure learning is manageable, meaningful, and supported by engaging activities.

Supporting Staff and Teacher Well-Being

Improving the work environment for teachers and staff remains a top priority. Yinghua aims to enhance the benefits package and increase salaries, despite financial constraints caused by limited state funding. At the end of the 2023-2024 school year, there was a 4% salary increase (performance-based) and 1% recognition bonus which set a historic high for budget allocation. Continued support is critical, and the school is actively seeking new resources and refining fundraising strategies to ensure Yinghua can maintain and improve staff compensation and well-being.

Promoting Social-Emotional Well-Being and Strengthening School-Family Partnerships

Yinghua's second key focus is fostering social emotional well-being among staff, students, and families. The school plans to collaborate with professional organizations to provide mental health resources and educational sessions. Ensuring that teachers and staff have a balanced and healthy work environment is essential to delivering high-quality education. Additionally, fostering parental involvement is crucial to student success. By equipping parents with tools to support their children's social-emotional development, Yinghua will lay a strong foundation for positive student outcomes for both at school and at home.

Enhancing Immersion Education and Best Practices

Refining the school's immersion education model is a critical focus for the upcoming year. Yinghua is committed to creating a school environment where students feel a strong sense of belonging while learning respect, kindness, and empathy. To meet the needs of students across varying skill levels, the school will adjust curricula, optimize schedules, hire additional support staff, and provide targeted professional development for teachers. These efforts will ensure all students, whether they require extra assistance or advanced learning opportunities, receive the support they need.

Furthermore, Yinghua will continue to innovate in early-grade immersion, focusing on integrating both target language and English learning in a way that supports students' bilingual development.

Cultivating External Relationships and Networking for Future Growth

Finally, Yinghua aims to strengthen relationships with alumni and expand the school's network with external organizations. These connections will provide students with meaningful opportunities and help the school continue to thrive. Building a strong community network will allow Yinghua to model global citizenship and open doors for new partnerships, collaborations, and fundraising opportunities.

In conclusion, Yinghua's future plan is aligned with the strategic priorities outlined for the school, with adjustments made to meet the evolving needs of students, teachers, and families. Yinghua's goal is to create an exceptional learning environment that prepares students for success in an ever-changing world.

Additional Reports and Policies

Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness

2023-2024 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report

Each Minnesota school district and charter school is required to set goals related to each of the components of the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness, formerly known as the World's Best Workforce, and to report on their progress towards those goals with data and short narratives. Yinghua Academy achievements, strategies, goals, and results from the 2023-2024 school year are summarized in the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.11. The Yinghua Academy School Board approved this report for submission to the Minnesota Department of Education on November 18, 2024. The Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report also is published as a section of the annual report on www.yinghuaacademy.org>About Us > School Management > Online WBWF report.

District or Charter Name: Yinghua Academy

WBWF/CACR Contact: Dr. Luyi Lien

Title: CEO/Executive Director

Phone: 612-788-9095

Email: luyi.lien@yinghuaacademy.org

Annual Report

CACR Requirement: For each school year, the school board must publish a report in the local newspaper, by mail or by electronic means on the district website.

Provide the direct website link to the district's CACR annual report. If a link is not available, describe how the district disseminates the report to stakeholders: Annual Reports are published on the school website and distributed electronically to school stakeholders. Find the Yinghua Academy 2023-2024 Annual Report at <https://www.yinghuaacademy.org/about/school-management/>.

Annual Public Meeting

CACR Requirement: School boards are to hold an annual public meeting to communicate plans for the upcoming school year based on a review of goals, outcomes and strategies from the previous year. Stakeholders should be meaningfully involved, and this meeting is to occur separately from a regularly scheduled school board meeting.

Provide the date of the school board annual public meeting to review progress on the CACR plan for the 2023-24 SY: The 2023-2024 Annual Public Meeting, where School Board candidates introduced themselves and the School Board Chair reviewed progress on the World's Best Workforce plan, took place in person at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 25, 2024, in the Yinghua Academy library.

Goals and Results

All Students Ready for School

Does your district/charter enroll students in Kindergarten? If no, please skip to the next goal.

Goal 1	Result	Goal Status
Before beginning kindergarten at Yinghua Academy, 100% of incoming kindergarten parents (or guardians) will share with Yinghua the results of their children’s Early Childhood Screening reports.	Yinghua received the results of 100% of Early Childhood Screenings completed by incoming kindergartners with parental consent.	<u>X</u> Goal Met (one-year goal)

Goal 2	Result	Goal Status
Before the school year begins, the school has on file immunization records or notarized waivers for 100% of kindergarten students.	Yinghua received 97% of immunization records or notarized waivers for incoming kindergartners. The school nearly meets this goal each year, and continues to strive for 100%.	<u>X</u> Goal Not Met (one-year goal)

All Students in Third Grade Achieving Grade-Level Literacy

Goal	Result	Goal Status
By the conclusion of FY 2023, the school’s third-grade proficiency rates for the most recent four years will average no less than two points higher than the state average in reading.	Yinghua’s third-grade proficiency rate remains on track to be ahead of the state average reading level by a minimum of two points. In the 2023-2024 school year, Yinghua third-graders were above the state average by 12.8 percentage points. Yinghua’s third-grade proficiency has remained over the state average by no less than 8.1 points since the 2020-2021 school year.	<u>X</u> On Track (multi-year goal)

Close the Achievement Gap(s) Between Student Groups

Goal 1	Result	Goal Status
<p>Each year, for each subgroup other than English Learners, for which the school has publicly reportable/sufficient counts: the school's proficiency rate will exceed the state-average proficiency rate for the subgroup for each reading and math.</p>	<p>In 2024, both subgroups achieved higher proficiency rates than the state average in math and reading. In math, the Free/Reduced Price Lunch subgroup was 38.5 percentage points above the state average and the Special Education subgroup was 19.2 percentage points above the state average. In reading, the Free/Reduced Price Lunch subgroup achieved a higher proficiency rate than the state average by 27.5% with a proficiency rate of 60.9%, and the Special Education subgroup was above the state average by 7.8% with a proficiency rate of 33.3%.</p>	<p><u>X</u> Met All (multiple goals)</p>

Goal 2	Result	Goal Status
<p>As published by the Minnesota Department of Education, for each year the school has publicly reportable/sufficient counts of English-Learner students: the school's English Learners will average higher progress towards target than the statewide average, and the school's percentage of English Learners who met or exceeded their targets will exceed the statewide average.</p>	<p>Yinghua's English Learners achieved this goal in both parts, as students averaged 76.6% progress toward the target, 30.2 percentage points higher than the state average, and 53.2% of students met or exceeded their targets which is 24.9 percentage points above Minnesota state average.</p>	<p><u>X</u> Goal Met (one-year goal)</p>

All Students Career and College-Ready by Graduation

Goal	Result	Goal Status
<p>Each year, the school will administer a nationally-normed assessment in at least 4th and 8th grades. Each year, the school's percentage of 4th and 8th grade students who meet or exceed the nationally-normed average for their respective grade, will exceed 50%.</p>	<p>In the 2023-2024 school year, Yinghua's fourth and eighth grade students achieved these goals in both subjects by a range of 24.42 to 43.98 percentage points. In fourth grade, 88.37% of students met or exceeded the nationally normed average in math and 74.42% in reading. In eighth grade, 93.98% met or exceeded the nationally normed average in math and 83.13% achieved it in reading.</p>	<p><u>X</u> Met All (multiple goals)</p>

All Students Graduate

Goal	Result	Goal Status
<p>Not applicable. Yinghua serves students in kindergarten through grade 8.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>

Compliance with Minnesota Statutes

This document fulfills two requirements: By Minnesota Statute, charter schools must publish an annual report, approved by the school's board of directors, covering enrollment, attrition, governance, management, staffing, finance, academics, innovation, and future plans; and charter schools must submit the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report required by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). The respective statutes from which these requirements stem are 124E.12, Subd. 2; and 120B.11.

Yinghua Academy Contact Information

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Dr. Luyi Lien

CEO/Executive Director of Yinghua Academy
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Yinghua Academy (Minnesota School District #4140)

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Reports Submitted

The Yinghua Academy School Board (Board of Directors) voted to approve the 2023-2024 Annual Report and 2023-2024 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness report on November 18, 2024. On November 25, 2024, the Annual Report was posted to the Friends of Education portal, and the Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report was uploaded to Minnesota Department of Education report site.

On November 25, 2024, Yinghua Academy published its 2023-2024 Annual Report and 2023-2024 Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report on the school's website. On the same day, the school digitally distributed the two reports to its stakeholders including its board, staff, and current parents.