

ACLS Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

511 Newtown Street, Littleton, MA

November 20, 2014 6:30-11:00 PM

Present: Xianghai Liu (Chairman), Wei Li, Jill Lu, Lixin Sun, Xiaomei Wang, Yumei Yao (ACLS Principal), Tao Zhu (Parent Council Chairman), Ming Zhang (ACLS Vice Principal – invited)

Absent: Dick Calenderella, Derek Skawinski

Chair/Facilitator: Xianghai Liu

Note Taker: Jill Lu

Opening Remark: Board chairman Xianghai Liu welcomes the members of the board and thanks for everyone's present.

School Operation:

Principal Yumei Yao presented to the Board a school operation report for the first two months of the year:

- The new registration/tuition policy implemented this year is very effective. Currently there is only one family who still has unpaid balance. Prompt payment is due to the new book distribution practice that requires students to pay their tuition in full before they could receive their textbooks.
- The new classroom placement procedure works well. In the procedure each student is assessed individually for his/her level and ability before being placed into proper grade and class.
- Acton police officers are onsite on a few Sundays to enforce the parking/traffic rules.
- The school has received no complaints from our landlord for facility use each Sunday.
- Teachers mentor program continues to provide teacher training and to enhance communication.
- Parent Council has been using the parent duty monitoring system effectively to manage the parent duty assignments. Corrections are made as needed. PC would like to have teachers' feedback on in-class duty to better manage the parent duty record.
- With no on job means of communication, the widespread of the ACLS classrooms becomes a challenge to the school management. The school admin thus proposes to establish a point of contact with a work cellphone during school operation. Another suggestion is to invest into a portable hot spot to provide internet communication for the ACLS administration. Lixin agreed to take a lead on this matter.
- There are also concerns that the school resources are not fully utilized. Admin member Lin Chen is leading the effort to consolidate reference books, and to eventually establish a school library. Historic document of the school would also need to be archived. Currently documents are scanned and stored in an old laptop. Those documents include old receipts and past teachers' contract. Former dean Hongyue Shi has a good collection of old documents/materials that need to be organized. Xianghai commented here: It is not necessary to archive receipts. Older records should be destroyed after the statute of limitation for tax expires (usually 5 years).
- Teacher training is different this year. Trainings are provided at different levels, i.e., beginner, intermediate, and advance for teachers and TAs. High school volunteer trainings are focused on school policies and volunteer responsibilities.
- Last year, Prof. Yu of Bridgewater State University led a study of ACLS and provided some good suggestions/recommendations. This year Prof. Yu will continue the study, may focus on MLP class. Evaluations with recommendations will be included in an April report.
- Registration for next semester will begin in a few weeks. The admin team is going to hold a

meeting to discuss the process soon.

- For spring registration, priority will be given to existing students who would remain in the same class from fall to spring. Online payment is planned for spring, and will be optional. At registration, students will have the choices of paying tuition by cash, check, or online. The school expects 50% of the tuition payments online. One advantage with online payment is PayPal, the online payment vendor of our choice, could provide accurate payment record.
- Two adult volunteers are willing to help with online payment and web administration.
- A tuition increase of \$10 is proposed for the spring. The tuition next semester is going to be \$195 (with no textbooks). The board agreed on the tuition increase. Xianghai brought it up that charges at Park-Damon building is high. To offset the cost, classes and club activities held there should be charged at rate comparable to other cultural classes. Yumei agreed and said that she would discuss the issue with club members on coming Sunday.
- Yumei also brought up the issue of school wide communication during snow and other emergencies. Since the cost of public announcement system is quite high, it is all agreed that the current school network of website, email, and phone would be sufficient to handle emergency situation.

In summary, Xianghai praised the admin's effort for a smooth school operation, and stressed that our school should still focus on Chinese Language teaching. Yumei expresses appreciation to the admin team's help and board's support.

Chinese New Year Celebration:

For this year's celebration, stage performance will be selected by audition, focused primary on talents in the ACLS community but will also open to a broader Chinese community. Xiaomei will lead the program for performance. Other responsibilities are coordinated by Tao and assigned as follows:

Budget: Xianghai Liu & Yumei Yao

Food: Tao Zhu & Lin Chen

Festival Activities: Xia Man

Vendor/Souvenirs: Yuemei Yao

Photograph: Chun Sun

Video Recording: George Sun

Publicity: Xianghai Liu

Ticket: Yumei Yao & Harry Chen

Poster: Yaping Ren, Li Yuan, & Chun Sun

Volunteer: Lingna Ma

Security: Xiangdong Xu & Hongbo Zeng

Backstage Manager: Xiangdong Xu

Fundraising: Jill Lu

Program Booklet: Jill Lu

Other Issue Discussed:

United Way

Min Zhang reported that ACLS was recently contacted by Acton United Way for an interview and survey focused on lives of Chinese elderly in the community. Representing ACLS, Min conducted a phone meeting with them. United Way is a non-profit charity that is interested in social issues. The

school admin is seeking guidelines on dealing with such request from organizations whose interests are outside of the scopes of ACLS. The board suggested that in the future, such request could be redirected to the Board's communication/public relation committee.

Book Sale Fundraising

Jill mentioned that a seminar planned at ACLS would invite Virginia Ross-Taylor, a former board member and FCC representative, to discuss her recent book, Red Thread (Hong Si Xian). The book tells the story of her life with two daughters adopted from China. Autographed copies of the book will be sold at the seminar and a portion of the proceeds will be donated to ACLS.

Board Member in Need of Help

It has come to our attention that board member Dick Calenderella has been ill for a while and missing several meetings. The board plan to pay a visit to Dick and organize for the community to help him.

Volunteer in China

For this initiative, Xianghai and Jill will continue to explore the opportunity for youth from ACLS to do volunteer work in China.