

John Muir Elementary School

Staff Survey about Chinese Language Program

Summary of Responses, Collected in June, 2008

John Muir was able to continue its Mandarin Chinese language program this academic year in grades K-1 and expand it to grade 2 as part of a federal Foreign Language Assistance Program grant to Seattle Public Schools. We want to find out how the staff at school feel about the program and what suggestions you might have for next year. If you have questions, feel free to contact me. Dr. Michele Anciaux Aoki, Early Language Learning Consultant, michele@anciauxinternational.com (206) 234-4029. Thank you!

<p>1. What do you like best about the opportunity for students at your school to learn Chinese?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To expose children to another language at an early age • Learning • Kids learn best at these early ages; our children need to be exposed to other languages and cultures. Families love it! • Global awareness of other cultures—head start in language acquisition • Fosters positive communication between all cultures • Students get to learn Chinese • I think it is a fantastic opportunity for students to learn an additional language at an early age • Students learn another language • The chance to learn a foreign language at an early age is indispensable • It is a fantastic educational opportunity • The fact that our students are exposed to a foreign language and culture • Children learning a foreign language • Making children bilingual at a young age—learning a foreign language • Having the opportunity for students to learn a foreign language. • Opportunity to learn another language • That students receive exposure to other languages and cultures and learn other languages at earlier ages. • It's a great opportunity for students to learn an additional language at an age when they learn it very fast. • I liked it. Started with students in K-1 and includes students as they move further to the next grade.
<p>2. What are your concerns?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • scheduling • scheduling • scheduling and whether we will be able to continue • teacher training • none • planning time around program • I don't have any concerns • Behavior issues • scheduling is sometimes an issue • Scheduling-they need to be flexible and work with our schedule • Scheduling? • taking time away from regular curriculum, scheduling • More time that kids are removed from class • Scheduling • One more "pull out" • Only that it can't be reinforced by staff that does not speak Mandarin

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was concerned about the length of time the assessment took per student; it should be shortened. Also, the end of year assessment was confusing. Students received certificates, but teachers didn't know how students scored.
<p>3. How well did the Chinese program go this year?</p>	<p><u> 8 </u> Very well <u> 8 </u> Well <u> 0 </u> Not well <u> 3 </u> No opinion <u>42%</u> Very well <u>42%</u> Well <u> 0 </u> Not well <u>18%</u> No opinion</p>
<p>4. What are your suggestions for next year?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I hope Pollyanna can come back to my classroom. She was wonderful! Planning Continue to look for more funding so we can continue indefinitely. Slower pace, more hand-outs for parents, more math (math is slightly illegible) More time Get with us first before planning your schedule Extend the program through 5th grade Keep it up. The Chinese teachers need to adapt to our schedule and not the other way around! I have none yet because I teach fifth grade, so it hasn't affected me. No time in between sessions, so when the teacher is running late, then it affects the class' daily schedule and routines that were planned. Give a "demo" on a "parent's night." That more classes have the opportunity to be a part of this program. Scheduling needs to involve all affected staff. Revise your assessment tool or provide another teacher to help during that time.

Summary Statement

The staff at John Muir recognize the value of providing an opportunity for students to learn Chinese beginning in elementary ("It is a fantastic educational opportunity.") and they feel that this year's program went **Well (42%)** or **Very well (42%)** (vs. 18% No opinion). However, they are concerned about scheduling time for the class, given other demands in the regular curriculum, and about student behavior/teacher training. They recommend extending the program to 5th grade and adjusting the schedule to be more manageable, such as including more time for "passing" between classes and more collaboration with the regular classroom teachers when developing the schedule.

Note: This comment about the end-of-year assessment ("I was concerned about the length of time the assessment took per student; it should be shortened. Also, the end of year assessment was confusing. Students received certificates, but teachers didn't know how students scored.") indicates that we need more communication about the oral proficiency assessment and its purpose (i.e. that it is not intended to give students a score or grade, but to help us evaluate what level of proficiency children can reach in a program like this). And the certificates were to acknowledge their participation in the program, i.e. their hard work, not just their achievement.