

Dear Parents, Students, Teachers and Board of Directors,

With Sept 12<sup>th</sup>, the 1<sup>st</sup> day of school quickly approaching, I almost can feel the pulse of the excitement. It is a moment that we have all been waiting for. It marks the end of a whole year of preparation work and the beginning of a new Chinese language school, the first in Wellesley!

Last year in June, a few Wellesley parents got together discussing the possibility of establishing a weekend Chinese school. The consensus was quickly reached with the mutual understanding of the need to prepare our children for the future. We then rolled up our sleeves and went to work. We started the site selection, registered the Non-Profit Organization status, outlined the curriculum, and reached out to the town representatives, to the public schools and to the business community. As soon as we set up our website, parents and students started to call and email us. The response was overwhelmingly supportive!

Now we have more than 70 students registered in our school. For Chinese language learning, we will offer Beginner Chinese course designed for students from families with no Chinese background, and Ma LipingK-Ma Liping 3 classes for kids from "heritage" families. In the second class period, we will provide Chinese Brush painting, Performing Art/Chinese Folk Dance, and Chess lessons for the cross-culture exposure. We have very high quality teachers, many of which have more than 10 years of teaching experience to offer. We are committed in helping all of our students reach their fullest potential.

While feeling encouraged and empowered by the support from the community, we also recognize the great challenges we face as a new school. The first issue was the textbook choice from the school administration's perspective. Ma Liping textbook have been in the market for a couple of years with a very impressive proving record but most community schools are still using it as a textbook choice for pilot programs because of the level of difficulty it imposes. We like the story-rich content and decided to adapt it as our main textbook believing the rational of the textbook design is more suitable for ABC (American Born Chinese) kids here. We will decide accordingly if we need to adjust the pace as we learn more from the feedbacks from the students. Second to consider was the young age of our students. The focus of our effort have been on how to design the classroom teaching best fit the learning style of young children under 10 years old. Then the traffic, the school finance...

Yes, the challenges are there, but we view them as opportunities. The community has already come together with donations and volunteered services. Parents, students and teachers, let's embrace the diversity of thought, background and ethnicity. Together, we will work to ensure positive learning in all classrooms and the success of the Wellesley Chinese Language School.

Xylina Wu

Principal of Wellesley Chinese Language School