



OYSTER RIVER CHINESE PROGRAM

Proposal to bring rich Chinese language and cultural opportunities to Oyster River elementary students

- Low cost to district.
- Affordable, community-focused afterschool program at Oyster River Middle School, led by a qualified Chinese teacher with support from UNH student volunteers.
- Includes sister-school relationship with a leading primary school in western China.
- Prepares our children for opportunity and leadership in a global economy.

OVERVIEW

On June 18, 2014, four parents presented to the School Board a proposal for an elementary afterschool program in Mandarin Chinese, preparing our children for opportunity and leadership in a global economy. The program would be offered through a partnership between Oyster River Cooperative School District and UNH's Confucius Institute, bringing a Chinese language option at very low cost to the Oyster River community. At this meeting, the Board voted unanimously to approve the concept of the creation of the afterschool program and to authorize Dr. Morse to proceed with pursuing a J-1 teacher visa.

On July 16, Dr. Morse and Yige Wang, director of the UNH Confucius Institute, signed a memorandum of understanding. Shortly thereafter, the UNH Confucius Institute received a commitment of a full-time teacher from China's Ministry of Education to support a program in Oyster River if it proceeds. Over the summer, Mr. Wang traveled to China to finalize details and help select a highly qualified teacher appropriate for Oyster River. Mrs. Yingying Qian was selected, completed her Confucius Institute training, was authorized for a visa, and arrived in Durham in November (see Mrs. Qian's qualifications, below).

This document contains additional details of the proposed program, for approval by the School Board. It has been reviewed by a representative Oyster River committee including: Abby Aldous (parent), Yanhong Dai (parent), Jessie Dill (parent), Carolyn Eastman (Assistant Superintendent), Lai and Josh Jenkins (parents), Karen Jin (parent), Dennis Harrington (MOH), Lisa Huppe (OR transportation), James Morse (Superintendent), Cathy Leach (UNH Youth Programs), Mary Rhie (UNH College of Liberal Arts), Jay Richard (ORMS), Yusi Turell (parent), Carrie Vaich (MW), and Yige Wang (Confucius Institute).

This final proposal will be presented to the School Board on November 19. With approval, we would begin community outreach and gauge demand for enrollment, starting with a community presentation at UNH on Monday, December 1, 5:30-7:30pm (dinner and childcare included). We would also recruit and train UNH student volunteers. A few sample classes would be held in January 2015, with the formal program launch planned for late January or early February.

TO GET INVOLVED:

If you would like to learn more, enroll a child, or get involved, please contact Yusi Turell (yusiwang@gmail.com) or Abby Aldous (abby.aldous@gmail.com).



[left] In Washington State, a welcome party for a group of 10-year-old Chinese foreign exchange students from Longjiang Road Primary School (Oyster River's potential sister school in Chengdu, China).

www.bainbridgereview.com/community/175977071.html

[above] British Prime Minister David Cameron plays table tennis with children at Longjiang Road Primary School.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-12-05/cameron-tells-british-children-to-learn-mandarin-not-french.html>

WHY CHINA? WHY CHINESE?

- China will soon become the world's largest economy, a position the United States has held since 1872.¹
- China is New Hampshire's 3rd largest export market.² Between 2003 and 2012, New Hampshire exports to China grew 284%, while growth in exports to all other countries combined was 80%.³ Liberty Mutual, one of the Seacoast's largest employers, has multiple offices in China and continues to expand its operations there.⁴
- Market globalization is driving more and more employers to pursue workers who can speak more than one language and who know how to be effective members of multi-cultural teams.⁵
- More than one billion people, or about one-fifth of the world's population, speak some form of Chinese as their first language.⁶ Students who study Chinese culture, language and history will be in stronger positions to take advantage of global opportunities.
- On November 10, 2014, China and the United States agreed to significantly extend the terms of short-term visas. This will have profound impact on the culture exchange between the two countries. For example, we may see more younger Chinese students coming to study in U.S. It will also make it easier for Chinese businesses and investors to get involved in U.S. projects, and vice versa.⁷
- When children start learning a language in elementary school, they can more easily achieve high levels of fluency than students who do not start another language until high school – especially in a tonal language such as Chinese.⁸

WHAT IS UNH'S CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE AND HOW DOES IT WORK WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS?

Confucius Institutes are nonprofit public institutions affiliated with the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, which aspires to promote Chinese language and culture, support local Chinese teaching internationally, and facilitate cultural exchanges. Confucius Institutes are funded by the Chinese government and work with their host university and local community to design mutually beneficial activities.⁹ Each institute has a partner university in China. The **Confucius Institute at UNH** is a partnership between UNH and Chengdu University in China. UNH's Confucius Institute offers a full curriculum in Chinese language and culture for UNH students and is building its partnerships with regional schools, including Portsmouth middle and high schools (see below).

The Confucius Institute can provide Chinese teachers to a small number of schools who are enthusiastic about a Chinese language program, at very low cost to local communities – as well as facilitate sister-school relationships and travel-abroad opportunities. In order to bring a qualified teacher from China to teach school-aged children, a school district must agree to support the teacher's J1 Teacher visa (regardless of whether the Teacher teaches during the school day or after school).

HOW DOES THE PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL DISTRICT UTILIZE CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE TEACHERS?

In 2012, UNH's Confucius Institute helped to establish a Chinese program in Portsmouth middle and high schools with a fulltime, grant-funded teacher. In September 2014, a second teacher hired locally (also through this Confucius Institute grant) will be placed at the middle school, delivering a three-year Chinese language option to fulfill college entry requirements. The Portsmouth model has been very successful. One prominent feature is its sister school relationship with Shishi Secondary School in Chengdu, which was founded in 141 B.C. and is the world's earliest public school. The two are discussing student and faculty exchange/visits in the near future.

WHAT ARE KEY ELEMENTS OF OYSTER RIVER'S PROPOSED AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM?

- Location: Oyster River Middle School, in a dedicated Confucius Institute classroom confirmed by Principal Jay Richard.
- Day/Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 3:45-4:45 PM (with parent pick-up until 5:15 PM)
 - 3:15-3:45 PM: Students take buses from Moharimet and Mast Way elementary schools, or arrive independently
 - 3:45-4:00 PM: Teacher meets students and feeds them nutritious snack
 - 4:00-4:45 PM: Age-appropriate introduction to Mandarin language and Chinese culture.
 - 4:45-5:15 PM: Window for parent pick-up, with Chinese games and activities.
 - Since this program is envisioned as an intensive and cumulative group program, students will be expected to participate both days each week.

- Add-ons:
 - Community language workshops biweekly on Thursdays, 5:00-6:30PM, geared towards parents who wish to support their children in Mandarin and build community around the program. Childcare and Chinese hearty appetizers will be provided.
 - Quarterly field trips to regional Chinatowns.
 - Sister-school relationship with Longjiang Road Primary School in Chengdu, China, to help children build an authentic global connection and perhaps travel abroad in the future.
 - Connection to other activities of UNH Confucius Institute, including its annual gala, the Mid-Autumn Festival, Tea Ceremonies during UNH International Education week, and its Startalk summer program. In the coming months, we will consider how the Startalk program can be enhanced to help these elementary students maintain or enhance their language skills over the summer.
- Students served in 2014-2015:
 - Eligible students for the elementary afterschool program will be in grades 1-3 living in Durham, Lee, or Madbury. (Next year, we envision the program would serve students in grades 1-4 or K-4, with differentiated programming to support both new students and those entering their second year of the program. In future years, we could keep adding years indefinitely, or perhaps until Oyster River offers Mandarin as an in-school language option.)
 - Our initial estimate from casual conversations is that 15-18 students will enroll. Once we receive School Board approval, we intend to reach out to the community through evening events and online, in order to gauge actual interest. If more than 18 students are interested, we will consider adding an additional two-day program (e.g., M/W) or offering a one-afternoon model for families who cannot or choose not to commit to a two-day program.
 - Additionally, Dr. Morse and ORMS Principal Richard have begun to explore offering an afterschool program for middle school students on the days when Mrs. Qian is not working with elementary students. Mrs. Qian is assigned to the Oyster River Cooperative School District and therefore available to teach after (or even during) the school day based on the district's needs.
- Curriculum:
 - Oyster River Cooperative School District will have total control over the curriculum and textbook choices. The Confucius Institute can provide design consultation if requested, or is happy to follow the lead of the district.
 - The Confucius Institute's default textbook for English-speaking elementary students is "Happy Chinese – Level One." This textbook, together with many other posters, charts, boards, flashcards, and audio-visual segments, provides students with visual and hands-on activities.
 - Moharimet parent, Karen Jin, will chair our curriculum committee and is in the process of recruiting members with relevant experience and interest. Our guiding objective is for students to be able to conduct simple conversations, read adapted materials, and write simple characters.
 - Parents will be welcome to sit in during classes or provide feedback for the curriculum. A parent meeting will be scheduled after each semester.
 - Students may split into two groups; while one is learning from the lead teacher in the classroom, the other group is engaging in more active programming led by UNH students (e.g., in the gym). This maintains a low student-teacher ratio and also ensures program variety after a long school day.
- Staffing
 - **Lead teacher:** Mrs. Yingying Qian. Mrs. Qian has 18 years of experience teaching English in China and Mandarin abroad. From November 2012 until July 2013, through another Confucius Institute program, she worked at New Line Learning Academy in Kent, UK. There, she taught Mandarin directly to elementary students and developed curriculum, as well as supported other teachers to teach in middle school classrooms. In China, she has served as classroom teacher, departmental curriculum lead, and director of student life and, in 2006, won first prize in the Competition of Youth Teachers' Teaching Skills of Shijiazhuang City. Mrs. Qian earned a bachelor's degree in Literature (English Education) from Hebei Normal University in 2001. She comes to Oyster River with her 4th grade daughter, Skye, who now attends Moharimet School (the Confucius Institute has noted that teachers who bring their children abroad tend to stay longer in district). See full resume, attached.
 - **2-3 UNH Student Teaching Assistants:** Taylor Soule, Lily Weyant, Mackenzie Nine. These UNH juniors and seniors spent summer 2014 in Chengdu, China, as part of an exchange program organized by UNH's Confucius Institute. To show its support for this community program and encourage professional student



participation, UNH will offer course credit to these students commensurate with the time they plan to spend in program support.

- **Additional UNH Student Volunteers** will be selected from the advanced class. There is also a Chinese language Club on campus, whose Faculty Chair is also interested in participating.
- **Transportation**
 - We are still working with the Oyster River Transportation Department to determine how students will travel from Mast Way and Moharimet schools to the Oyster River Middle School. Riding buses on existing routes, Ms. Huppe has indicated that both Mast Way and Moharimet students would arrive close to 4:00. Mast Way students would be dropped off at the end of residential stops because of district boundaries. Moharimet students would travel a bus that passes the middle school at the end of its current route.
 - Our current proposal calls for a 3:45 arrival + snack and a 4:00 start to lessons, so that students will still be somewhat fresh after a long day and ready to engage in the difficult instruction of Chinese tones and characters. We also have a 4:45 start to parent pick-up because we have heard from some parents that any later time would cut in to family dinner and would not be attractive to them. (The pick-up window closes at 5:15 to allow for working parents who have less flexibility.)
 - Another option would be for the Confucius Institute and/or parents to rent a van that would travel from Mast Way, to Moharimet, to the middle school directly after school. Once we gauge community interest, we will speak with interested parents about the costs and benefits of the private option and make a collective decision that considers family preferences in travel time, dismissal time, and cost. This is a relatively minor difference of 15-20 minutes and a maximum of \$50 in semester costs.
- **Costs:**
 - Families will be expected to pay \$50 per student per semester, to defray costs for T-shirt, snacks, community events, and field trips. In spring 2015, families may be asked to pay up to an additional \$50 (\$100 total) to offset start-up transportation costs as described above; financial aid will be available. UNH Youth Programs will support the registration and payment process through its eEVENTS system.
 - UNH's Confucius Institute will pay costs for teacher salary, instructional materials, tuition scholarships, and other programmatic activities, via a grant from China's Ministry of Education.
 - ORCSD may be responsible for additional special needs support, to be elaborated upon by the Superintendent's Office at the November 19th School Board meeting.

References: (1) World Bank International Comparison Program Report 2014; (2) US Census Bureau; (3) US-China Business Council; (4) From Liberty Mutual website and parent employee; (5) Committee for Economic Development, 2006; (6) [Wikipedia – Chinese language](#); (7) [Reuters, "U.S., China to extend visa validity to boost trade, tourism."](#) (8) Asia Society, 2012, [Chinese Language Learning in the Early Grades](#); (9) For discussion, see Edward McCord's ["Confucius Institutes: Hardly a Threat to Academic Freedoms"](#) in The Diplomat.

OYSTER RIVER COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

SAU # 5

36 Coe Drive

Durham, New Hampshire

To: Oyster River School Board
Dr. James Morse, Superintendent

From: Sue Caswell, Business Administrator

Date: November 19, 2015

Subject: Negotiations Update

We have reached a tentative agreement with The Oyster River Paraprofessionals and Support Staff Association (ORPASS). The changes to the agreement are outlined below:

- A three year agreement for school years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18
- A change in the health insurance plan copay for prescription drugs to 10/20/45
- Added 2 holidays to paraprofessional days, added 2 leave days to food service, reduced required workshop days for both making the total paid days equal for both groups
- Deleted language from previous contract no longer relevant
- Adjusted steps of existing wage schedule to correct unequal step progression, add 3 steps to each wage schedule, and gave existing employees 2 steps to make up for loss in last contract(see attached)
- Revised language for vacancies and added recall procedure due to reduction in force.

Cost:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Salary and Benefit Cost	\$156,982	\$121,343	\$84,600
Savings for change in health coverage	-21,358		
Total Cost	\$135,624	\$121,343	\$84,600